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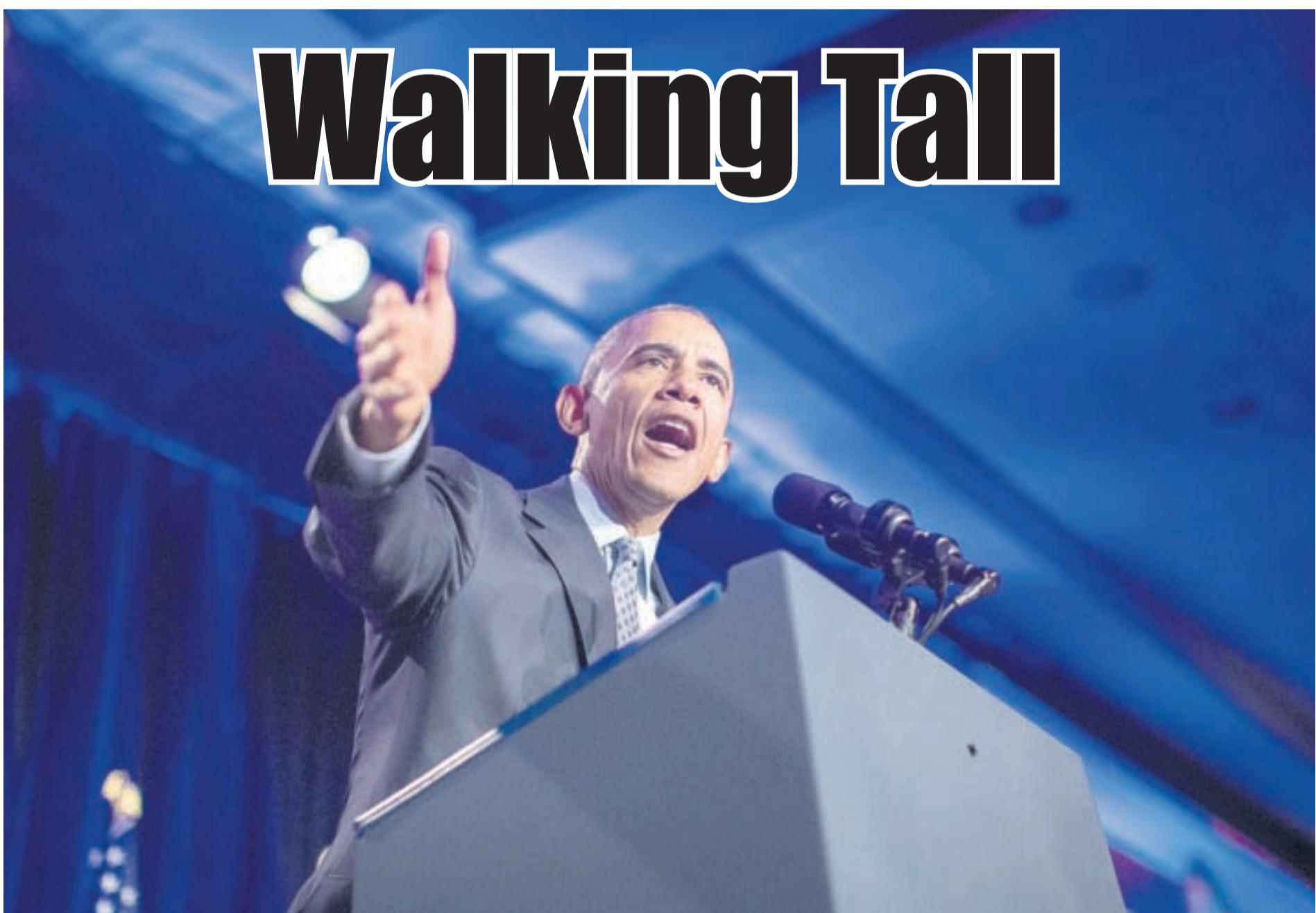
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Saturday, February 21, 2015

Walking Tall



President Barack Obama speaks at the winter meeting of the Democratic National Committee in Washington, Feb. 20, 2015. Obama ridiculed Republicans on Friday, describing them as a party seeking to mimic the Democratic Party's middle class rhetoric even as Republican officials and candidates pursued policies that enrich the wealthy.

(Jabin Botsford/The New York Times)

Obama Points to Economy to Parry GOP Attacks

MICHAEL D. SHEAR
© 2015 New York Times

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama ridiculed Republicans on Friday, describing them as seeking to mimic the Democratic Party's middle-class rho-

tic even as they pursue policies that enrich the wealthy.

In a speech at the winter meeting of the Democratic National Committee, Obama highlighted the economic progress

the country has made during his time in office and pushed back against attacks on his record from Republicans who are already gearing up for the 2016 presidential campaign. The president spent much

of the speech assailing the hypocrisy of Republicans, who he said have recently tried to convince Americans that they care about the fate of the middle class.

"I'm encouraged that they're speaking about

middle class and speaking about wages," Obama said with a sarcastic tone. "But there is this old saying that you can't just talk the talk."

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Walking Tall

Continued from Front

"You gotta walk the walk," he said, prompting applause and laughter from the Democratic audience. He also laid out the case for his economic policies, a message that he is making more forcefully these days as a way of fighting criticism from Republican presidential hopefuls.

Obama said 2014 was a "breakthrough" year for the U.S. economy and he said the economic data - more jobs, higher wages, lower deficits - should be enough to prove that his

president's focus on "middle-class economics" is in part intended to set the stage for the political conversation in the hopes that it will help the Democratic presidential candidate and the party's congressional candidates.

But there is also a self-preservation imperative. Obama needs to defend his two terms in office if he wants to shape how history will view his presidency. That necessity has come into sharp focus in recent weeks as the Republican Party's many possible candidates have begun to outline the contours of their messages with sharp-edged attacks on

heaped criticism on the president's economic and foreign policies.

In a speech in New Hampshire this week, Chris Christie, the governor of New Jersey, reprised a criticism that he had used before, saying that Obama was "like a man wandering around in a dark room, feeling along the wall for the light switch of leadership."

"He hasn't found it for six years, and he's not going to find it in the next two years at the White House," Christie said. "This has been an abject failure of leadership by this president, and it's time for him to go."

And Rudolph W. Giuliani,



President Barack Obama leaves the White House, on his way to Marine One, in Washington. Obama on Friday delivered a speech to Democrats highlighting the economic progress the country has made during his time in office and pushing back against attacks on his record from Republicans who are already gearing up for the 2016 presidential campaign.

(Doug Mills/The New York Times)

administration's economic policies worked and the Republican approach would not have.

"Just go back and look at the statements that were made each year by these folks about all of these policies," Obama said. "Because apparently they don't remember."

For the next 20 months, Obama will be on the sidelines of the 2016 presidential campaign, watching as the Republican candidates attack his policies and criticize his presidency, while the Democratic candidates debate what they would have done differently.

Officials have said that the

Obama's policies.

In a speech this week, Jeb Bush accused the president of "hashtag diplomacy" for making what he said were empty threats to act against Iran and Syria. He called Obama's foreign policy "inconsistent and indecisive," and said the president had weakened America's place in the world.

"The great irony of the Obama presidency is this: Someone who came to office promising greater engagement with the world has left America less influential in the world," Bush said.

Other potential Republican candidates have

the former mayor of New York, burst into the headlines this week by accusing Obama of not loving America. He doubled down on those comments on Thursday, heaping more criticism on the president. "What I don't find with Obama - this will get me in more trouble again - is a really deep knowledge of history," Giuliani told The New York Times. "I think it's a dilettante's knowledge of history."

Obama is unlikely to respond to such criticism directly, especially from the many Republican hopefuls who are eager to draw the president into a direct back-and-forth. □

Unwelcome Mat: White House tries to counter Netanyahu visit

MATTHEW LEE

JULIE PACE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House is mulling ways to undercut Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's upcoming trip to Washington and blunt his message that a potential nuclear deal with Iran is bad for Israel and the world in what has become a nasty grudge match.

There are limits. Administration officials have discarded the idea of President Barack Obama himself giving an Iran-related address to rebut the two speeches Netanyahu is to deliver during his early March visit. But other options remain on the table.

Among them: a presidential interview with a prominent journalist known for coverage of the rift between Obama and Netanyahu, multiple Sunday show television appearances by senior national security aides and a pointed snub of America's leading pro-Israel lobby, which is holding its annual meeting while Netanyahu is in Washington, according to the officials. The administration has already ruled out meetings between Netanyahu and Obama, saying it would be inappropriate for the two to meet so close to Israel's March 17 elections. But the White House is now doubling down on a cold-shoulder strategy, including dispatching Cabinet members out of the country and sending a lower-ranking official than normal to represent the administration at the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the officials said.

Vice President Joe Biden will be away, his absence behind Netanyahu conspicuous in coverage of the speech to Congress. Other options were described by officials, who spoke only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss internal deliberations.

Netanyahu's plan for a March 3 address to a joint meeting of Congress has further strained already tense ties between the U.S. and Israel. Congressional Republicans orchestrated Netanyahu's visit without consulting the White House or State Department, a move the Obama administration blasted as a break in diplomatic protocol. Some Democratic lawmakers say they will boycott the speech.

U.S. officials believe Netanyahu's trip to Washington is aimed primarily at derailing a nuclear deal with Iran, Obama's signature foreign policy objective. While Netanyahu has long been skeptical of the negotiations, his opposition has increased over what he sees as Obama's willingness to make concessions that would leave Iran on the brink of being able to build a nuclear weapon. His opposition has intensified as negotiations go into overdrive with an end-of-March deadline for a framework deal. "I think this is a bad agreement that is dangerous for the state of Israel, and not just for it," Netanyahu said Thursday.

The difference of opinion over the deal has become unusually rancorous.

The White House and State Department have both publicly accused Israeli officials of leaking "cherry-picked" details of the negotiations to try to discredit the administration. And, in extraordinary admissions this week, the administration acknowledged that the U.S. is withholding sensitive details of the talks from Israel, its main Middle East ally, to prevent such leaks.

The rebukes have only emboldened the leader of Israel, whose country Iran has threatened to annihilate. He has a double-barrel attack on the Iran talks ready for when he arrives in Washington. □

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Big Dig: Boston's struggle to get rid of all the snow

WILLIAM J. KOLE
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — If it's just snow, why is Boston having such a difficult time making it all go away? Midway through a winter that's shattered records in the U.S. Northeast and buried Boston in more than 8 feet (nearly 3 meters) of snow, locals and outsiders alike could be forgiven for wondering why a world-class city that's accustomed to heavy snowfall — and prides itself on being a global center of technology and innovation — can't seem to dig out and move on.

Here's a brief explanation of what's at stake in the battle against the elements:

ENOUGH TO FILL A FOOTBALL STADIUM 100 TIMES

Sure, it's just snow, but perspective is everything. Nearly 100 inches (250 centimeters) has fallen on Boston — making this the second-snowiest winter since records started being kept a century ago. That's more than enough to bury 7-foot 4-inch (2.2-meter) Stretch Middleton, the tallest player on the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. In Massachusetts alone, workers have removed enough snow to fill the New England Patriots football team's 68,756-seat Gillette Stadium well over 100 times. Public works officials have struggled to keep up, despite deploying thousands of snowplows, dump trucks and front-end loaders.

TOO COLD FOR NATURE TO MELT IT

Eventually, temperatures will rise enough to shrink snowbanks so tall that university students have used them as ski slopes. But it hasn't happened yet, and now the region is in the icy grip of an arctic blast that's making the snowpack harder and complicating efforts to remove it. Boston has borrowed machines from New York City that are capable of melting 135 tons of snow per hour. Officials also are using special "snow trains" fitted with plows to clear railways of the ice and snow that's been fouling the morning and evening rush hours for commuters reliant on Boston's public transit system, America's oldest and fifth-business.

WHY NOT DUMP IT IN THE OCEAN?

Actually, they are. Normally it's forbidden to dump snow in the ocean because it contains contaminants that can kill fish and damage the marine environment. But Massachusetts environmental protection authorities have bent the rules because of the sheer mass of snow that's accumulated. □



Pedestrians walk single file through snow banks on a Beacon Street sidewalk in Boston, Friday, Feb. 20, 2015. Arctic air plunged parts of the U.S. East Coast into deep freezes and broke records from Washington to New York on Friday.

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

Records fall, ferries freeze as eastern US faces arctic cold

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Arctic air plunged parts of the U.S. East Coast into deep freezes and broke records from Washington to New York on Friday.

The cold snap followed snow and ice storms earlier in the week, and weather forecasters warned that more sleet and freezing rain will be possible in the coming days.

Residents had to deal with more school cancellations, power outages, road hazards and water main breaks.

The deep freeze transformed Niagara Falls in northern New York state into an icy spectacle, en-

casing the trees around it into crystal shells and drawing tourists.

The Niagara River is flowing below the ice cover, so the falls aren't completely frozen.

But days of extreme cold have created a thick coating of ice and snow on every surface near the falls, including railings, trees and boulders.

The National Weather Service said the low Friday got down to 6 degrees Fahrenheit (14 Celsius) at Reagan National Airport, just across the Potomac River from Washington. That beats the record low of 8 degrees Fahrenheit (-13 Celsius), set

in 1896.

At Baltimore's airport, the temperature dipped down to 2 degrees Fahrenheit (17 Celsius). The record was 4 degrees Fahrenheit (15 Celsius), set in 1979.

In New York City's Central Park, the temperature hit a record 2 degrees Fahrenheit (-16 Celsius) (-17 Celsius), beating the previous low of 7 degrees Fahrenheit (-14 Celsius) in 1950.

A Boston-bound commuter ferry carrying more than 100 passengers had trouble steering in the ice and had to be towed to port. Ferry service was canceled elsewhere in the Northeast. □

US West Coast seaport labor dispute faces deadline

JUSTIN PRITCHARD

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — With a Friday deadline looming, negotiators labored to reach a deal in a contract dispute that has snarled international trade at seaports from Southern California to Seattle.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez told dockworkers and their employers that if they cannot find common ground in San Francisco, he will take the parties to Washington next week. The idea is that, after nine months of talks, it will help to have a change of scenery and proximity to elected leaders who are increasingly pushing for a resolution to economically damaging problems on the West Coast waterfront.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association, made up of shipping companies and port terminal operators, are working under a media blackout and had no comment Friday.

Billions of dollars of cargo are sitting on dozens of massive ships anchored outside West Coast ports. They cannot dock because of historically bad cargo bottlenecks at 29 ports that handle about \$1 trillion of trade annually, much of it with Asia.

Though the economic impact has been hardest on specific industries — U.S. produce and meat exporters, for example, and smaller importers of consumer goods — Wal-Mart Stores



A cargo container ship operated by Yang Ming Marine Transport Corp. sits docked at the Port of Tacoma, Friday, Feb. 20, 2015, in Tacoma, Wash. With a Friday deadline looming, negotiators for the two sides in the contract dispute that has snarled international trade at U.S. West Coast seaports are laboring to reach a settlement as billions of dollars of cargo are sitting massive ocean-going ships anchored outside port facilities.

(AP Photo/Ted S. Warren)

Inc. warned Thursday that port congestion could affect selection in the retail giant's stores.

Cargo already was moving slowly due to systemic problems in the supply chain, including a shortage of truck beds to carry containers of cargo from

dockside yards to distribution warehouses. Starting this fall, problems reached crisis levels as dockworkers slowed their work rate to comply fully with safety rules and companies that load and unload ships rolled out partial worker lockouts. □

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US senators urge Kerry to tighten Russian sanctions

ANDREW TAYLOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bipartisan group of senators Friday called on Secretary of State John Kerry to tighten economic sanctions on Russia and provide defensive weapons to Ukraine after Russian-backed rebels breached this month's cease-fire agreement and seized the Ukrainian town of Debaltseve.

The senators, including No. 2 Senate Democrat Dick Durbin and Armed Services Committee Republican Chairman John McCain, told Kerry in a letter that "it is time to provide defensive weapons to Ukraine and to consider imposing additional sanctions and penalties that will increase the cost of Putin's actions."

The seizure of Debaltseve this week came despite

a cease-fire agreement reached between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko sealed a week ago. The senators see the cease-fire as failing, though France and Germany, which brokered the accord, hope to salvage it.

The war in eastern Ukraine has killed more than 5,600 people and forced over a million to flee their homes since fighting began in April, a month after Russia annexed the mostly Russian-speaking Crimean Peninsula. Putin denies arming the rebels.

"Putin's duplicity regarding these agreements has been matched only by his delusional denials of Russian involvement in eastern Ukraine," the senators wrote. □

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Prosecution expert says 'American Sniper' suspect not insane

EMILY SCHMALL

Associated Press

STEPHENVILLE, Texas (AP)

An ex-Marine charged with shooting "American Sniper" author Chris Kyle and another man was not legally insane, a prosecution expert said, suggesting the man may have gotten some of his ideas from the television show "Seinfeld." Prosecutors called rebuttal witnesses Friday in the trial of Eddie Ray Routh, who is charged with killing Kyle and his friend Chad Littlefield. Routh's attorneys, who are pursuing an insanity defense, rested their case Thursday.

Dr. Randall Price, a forensic psychologist, testified Friday that Routh had a paranoid disorder made worse by his use of alcohol and marijuana, calling his condition "cannabis-induced psychosis."

"In my opinion, he did know what he was doing was wrong, and he did it anyway," Price said.

A defense witness, Dr. Mitchell H. Dunn, testified Thursday that Routh had schizophrenia and showed signs of the illness for as long as two years before the February 2013 shootings. Dunn said Routh described seeing neighbors

and friends as turning into pig-human hybrids.

Price repeatedly accused Routh of "setting the stage" for an insanity defense. He suggested Routh may have gotten the idea from "Seinfeld" or the TV show "Boss Hog." In a "Seinfeld" episode, one character, Kramer, believes he has discovered a "pig-man."

"I don't know for a fact that he saw that episode of 'Seinfeld,' but I do know that he's watched 'Boss Hog,'" Price said.

"For a long time, he's talked a lot about pigs to a lot of people. So it's suspicious."

He and another prosecution expert, Dr. Michael Arambula, said Routh's actions do not meet the legal definition of insanity under state criminal law.

"Any time intoxication is present, the game is over," Arambula testified.

The 27-year-old Routh faces mandatory life in prison without parole if convicted of capital murder, since prosecutors have said they are not seeking the death penalty. The jury can also find Routh not guilty by reason of insanity, in which case the trial judge can begin proceedings to have Routh committed. □



Eddie Ray Routh enters the court during his capital murder trial at the Erath County, Donald R. Jones Justice Center Friday, Feb. 20, 2015, in Stephenville, Texas. Routh, 27, of Lancaster, is charged with the 2013 deaths of Navy SEAL Chris Kyle and his friend Chad Littlefield at a shooting range near Glen Rose, Texas.

(AP Photo/LM Otero, Pool)

Girls describe stabbing classmate in video

WAUKESHA, Wisconsin (AP)

— Police interrogation video of two girls accused of nearly killing a classmate to please a fictional character shows them describing their calculated plan to kill their friend, telling her they planned to go bird watching.

"People who trust you become very gullible," one of the girls told a police investigator following an attack on Payton Leutner May 31

in a wooded area of a park in Midwestern Wisconsin state.

"It was sort of sad," the girl added.

WISN-TV obtained 9 hours of separate videotaped interrogations of the girls, ages 12 and 13. One of the girls wipes away tears as she explains how they hoped to please Slender Man by killing Leutner, who survived 19 stab wounds and crawled to a path

near the woods after her attackers left.

"So we told her we were going to get help, but we really weren't. We were going to run and let her pass away. So, we ran," one girl explains to a detective.

The other girl spent about 6 hours in an interrogation room, some of which she sits alone singing to herself.

"We knew it was going to be at my birthday sleepover. □

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Dr. Zachary Rubin, medical director of clinical epidemiology and infection prevention at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, right, takes questions from the media in Los Angeles. Los Angeles County health officials say a "superbug" bacterial outbreak at a local hospital doesn't pose any threat to public health.

(AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

Lawsuits likely to follow 'superbug' scare

BRIAN MELLEY
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — With an antibiotic-resistant "superbug" outbreak connected to its facility, Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center stopped short of pointing a finger at the manufacturer of a medical instrument believed to have spread the deadly germs. The maker of the product was careful not to blame the hospital as it issued new cleaning instructions emphasizing meticulous manual sterilization. Things may not be so polite once lawyers get involved. Lawsuits are expected to follow the outbreak tied to two deaths and several infections, with the hospital and manufacturer pointing fingers at each other.

"That's exactly the kind of skirmishing you're going to see," said John Culhane, co-director of the Family Health Law & Policy Institute at the Widener University

City School of Law in Delaware. "The bottom line is that the two defendants will be hauled into court, and they'll be trying to do two things: One, they didn't do anything wrong; the second thing is to pin the blame on the other defendant."

Two people have died at UCLA, and five others have been infected with the bacteria known as carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or CRE, after undergoing similar endoscopic procedures to diagnose and treat pancreatic and bile-duct problems between October and January, hospital officials said. More than 170 other patients also may have been exposed.

The family of an 18-year-old student in grave condition from the bacteria is considering suing the endoscope's manufacturer, Olympus Corporation of the Americas, an arm of

Japan's Olympus Corp, attorney Kevin Boyle said.

That hard-to-clean medical instrument used on more than half a million people in the U.S. every year has become the focus of the investigation into the outbreak.

Olympus emphasized in a statement Thursday that meticulous manual sterilization is needed. The company said it was issuing new instructions and working with federal officials.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration warned doctors Thursday that the device's complex design and tiny parts make complete disinfection extremely difficult. Even when cleaning instructions are followed, germs may linger, the FDA said. Between January 2013 and December 2014, the FDA received 75 reports involving 135 patients in the U.S. who may have been infected by tainted scopes. □

US to fine air bag maker Takata \$14,000 per day

JOAN LOWY
TOM KRISHER
Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — The U.S. government will fine Japanese air bag maker Takata Corp. \$14,000 per day for failing to fully cooperate in a long-running investigation of faulty and potentially dangerous air bag inflators.

The inflators, in cars made by 10 companies, can explode with too much force, spewing shrapnel into drivers and passengers. At least six people have been killed and 64 injured worldwide due to problem.

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced the fines Friday in Richmond, Virginia, calling Takata a "bad actor" for allegedly dumping 2.4 million pages of documents on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration without the legally required explanation of what's in them. The agency demanded data from the company in two special orders last year, but it said Takata failed to provide an index so investigators know what to look for. Fines will accrue daily starting Friday until Takata fully explains the documents, the agency said in a letter to Takata. The fines are another escalation in the public fight between NHTSA and Takata, which also refused the agency's demand to issue a nationwide recall of driver's side air bag inflators last year. Automakers recalled the cars on their own, however. Members of Congress have criticized the company for a lack of cooperation as the government, Takata and automakers try to track down the exact cause of the inflator problem.

Takata officials have said publicly they are working with the agency, but Foxx said that's not true. "We have a very serious defect issue. We're working as hard as we can to get defective (cars) off our roads. ... We will not tolerate this."

NHTSA's letter also threatens depositions of Takata employees and court action from the U.S. Justice Department, which already is investigating the company.

In a statement, Takata disagreed that it hasn't cooperated. The company said it turned over documents, meets regularly with the agency and has explained testing. Tests so far support Takata's view "that age and sustained exposure to heat and humidity is a common factor in the small number of inflators that have malfunctioned," the company said.

Takata also said it has increased production of replacement parts and is working with competitors to support automaker recalls. "We remain fully committed to cooperating with NHTSA," the statement said.

Takata's inflator propellant, ammonium nitrate, can burn faster than designed if exposed to prolonged airborne moisture. That can cause it to blow apart a metal canister meant to contain the explosion. So far, automakers have recalled about 17 million vehicles in the U.S. since 2008, and about 22 million globally due to Takata inflators. There could be as many as 30 million vehicles with Takata air bags nationwide. Fines from NHTSA are capped at \$35 million per infraction. Since Takata is alleged to have violated two orders, it could be fined up to \$70 million. But at \$14,000 per day. □

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US Financial Front: Rents rise overall but dip in Chicago, Minneapolis

JOSH BOAK
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. home rental prices rose at a steady rate in January, but prices barely budged or even dipped in parts of the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic.

Real estate data firm Zillow said Friday that prices increased a seasonally adjusted 3.3 percent in January compared with 12 months earlier. But some major cities are finding themselves with an excessive supply of apartments and houses, reducing price pressures for renters.

In the wake of the Great Recession, more Americans are shifting away from home ownership, often because their low-incomes make it difficult to save for a down payment or they live in cities with expensive housing.

The homeownership rate slipped to 64 percent at the end of 2014, the lowest level in two decades, according to the Census Bureau. Some of that decline also reflects the ravages from the housing bust that triggered the recession in late 2007, as foreclosures and overbuilding left plenty of empty houses.

Still, builders have started to respond to the greater demand as the job market improves and more millennials seek apartments. Over the past 12 months, there has been a 24.5 percent increase in ground-breakings for apartment complexes, according to a separate Census report released this week.

As more apartments come on the market, price pressures should ease for rent-

ers, said Svenja Gudell, director of economic research at Zillow. Modest increases or slight declines should help improve affordability, making it easier for renters to eventually transition to home ownership. Zillow reported that rents have fallen 0.5 percent in the Chicago area and 0.3 percent in Minneapolis over the past year. "Chicago did a whole lot of overbuilding during the housing boom," Gudell said, noting that some select downtown neighborhoods in the Windy City still have prices rising at or above the national average. Dann Wunderlich, 24, lives with his fiancee in a "spacious" one-bedroom apartment in Chicago's Buena Park neighborhood. Together, they pay \$1,050 a month, well below what Wunderlich says he was paying in 2011 for an apartment elsewhere in the city. "People in our area move year to year because they're consistently finding a better price," Wunderlich said. "I know that's what we did until we found this apartment. If we found a better apartment with a cheaper rent, we would move."

Similarly, construction has been making more apartments available around Baltimore and Washington, where rental prices rose 1.5 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively. A separate report by the rental marketplace Apartment List found that rents for a two-bedroom apartment in metro Washington were averaging \$1,990 a month, up just 0.1 percent over the past year. □



A "for rent" sign is posted outside a home in Denver. Real estate data firm Zillow reported on U.S. home rental prices in January 2015 on Friday, Feb. 20, 2015.

(AP Photo/David Zalubowski)



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Wal-Mart raises could help lift pay in lower-wage industries

C. S. RUGABER
CANDICE CHOI

AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The modest raises that Wal-Mart has said it will give its lowest-paid workers provide a glimmer of hope for lower-wage workers in other companies and industries.

Other retailers and some fast food restaurants may now feel compelled to follow suit to retain their workers and attract others to fill openings, economists said. Wal-Mart's move follows a sustained campaign for higher wages by some of the company's employees and a nationwide debate over whether to raise the federal minimum wage.

Given Wal-Mart's position as the nation's largest private employer, its decision to yield, even in a limited way, could embolden more employees to seek raises.

"They really set the standard across the retail sector," said Claire McKenna, a policy analyst at the National Employment Law Project, which advocates for low-wage workers. "What they do really matters."

Josh Bivens, research and policy director at the liberal Economic Policy Institute, said Wal-Mart's move also reduces the pressure on other retailers to keep labor costs at rock-bottom levels. "It at least takes away the

excuse from other firms that 'We'd like to raise wages, but we can't because we have to compete with Wal-Mart,'" Bivens said. "It could possibly give some competitive breathing space to other retailers to raise wages."

On Thursday, Wal-Mart said it would increase its minimum pay to \$9 an hour in April and to \$10 by February 2016. The move will mean raises for 500,000 of its 1.3 million employees. The average full-time wage will tick up to \$13 an hour from \$12.85. For part-timers, the average will go to \$10 from \$9.48.

Wal-Mart's decision follows similar steps by other companies. The Gap has raised



Protestors, including Kris Varrette, right, chant for increased wages and union rights at fast food restaurants in Las Vegas. Wal-Mart's decision to raise hourly wages for its lowest-paid workers provides a glimmer of hope for others working at minimum wage or just above. Other retailers and fast food restaurants may now follow suit in order to hold on to employees.

(AP Photo/John Locher)

its minimum wage to \$10 an hour. Swedish home furnishings retailer Ikea raised pay for thousands of its U.S. workers this year by an average of 17 percent to \$10.76 an hour. Health insurer Aetna has said it will pay a minimum of \$16 an hour.

That's more than double the federal minimum wage of \$7.25.

All of which means that many people who earn less than \$10 an hour will now have more options.

"If you work at a fast-food restaurant" for \$7.25 an hour, "you are going to want to leave that job and work at the Wal-Mart nearby," said Sylvia Allegretto, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley.

Allegretto noted anecdotal evidence, for example, that recent increases in Washington state's minimum wage — now \$9.47 an hour — led residents of nearby Idaho to seek work in Washington.

Workers at McDonald's and other fast-food com-

panies have agitated for higher pay, coalescing around demands for \$15 an hour.

But unlike Wal-Mart, which owns all its stores, the fast-food industry is largely franchised. Companies like McDonald's, Wendy's and Burger King say they don't make employment and pay decisions on behalf of their franchisees.

The relationship between companies like McDonald's and workers at franchised restaurants has come under intense scrutiny, however. Last year, in a victory for unions, the National Labor Relations Board ruled that McDonald's is a "joint employer" that could be held liable for its franchisees' policies. Hearings on disciplinary steps are set for March.

McDonald's has vowed to contest the NLRB's ruling. Kathryn Slater-Carter, who owns a McDonald's franchise near San Francisco, thinks businesses located near a Wal-Mart store could be forced to raise pay. □



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Greece and Eurozone settle their differences - for now

LORNE COOK

PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) —

Following weeks of recrimination and distrust, Greece and its creditors in the 19-nation eurozone reached an agreement Friday on extending the country's rescue loans, a move that should dramatically ease concerns it was heading for the euro exit as soon as next month.

The agreement, which looked a long way off Thursday when one German official compared Athens' request for more time to the infamous Trojan Horse, will mean that Greece will avoid going bankrupt, at least over the four months of the extension. It should also mean that capital controls won't be needed and that Greek banks will have enough money to stock up their ATMs.

To get the money though, the Greek government has one more hurdle to clear. On Monday, it has to present a series of unspecified economic reforms measures that are deemed acceptable by creditors and rooted in Greece's previously enacted bailout agreement — something the government had promised not to do.

Still, the Greek government will be the author of the reforms pursued and that represents a change from the past five years when Greece has relied on rescue money to avoid going bankrupt and was effectively ordered to enact a series of austerity measures.

"We have established common ground again," said Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the eurozone's top official, after the meeting in Brussels.

And Greek Finance Minis-

ter Yanis Varoufakis said the deal allows both Greece and Europe "to turn a page

likely to include a series of measures to tackle corruption and tax evasion aren't

"won't be shot down by the institutions."

If the list of reforms is sanc-



Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis, center, speaks with Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem, left, during a round table meeting of eurogroup finance ministers in Brussels on Friday, Feb. 20, 2015. Following weeks of recrimination and distrust, Greece and its creditors in the 19-nation eurozone reached an agreement Friday on extending the country's rescue loans.

(AP Photo/Virginia Mayo)

... As of today, we are beginning to be co-authors of our destiny."

Varoufakis conceded that the Greek government would be "in trouble" if the reform measures, which are

backed by representatives from the European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund and European Commission — previously known as the troika. However, he insisted they

tioned, then it will be further detailed and agreed upon by the end of April.

Friday's agreement was clinched just a week before Greece's 240 billion-euro (\$270 billion) bailout pro-

gram expires and is aimed at buying time for both sides to agree on a longer-term deal to ease the burden of the bailout loans. The Greek government isn't getting the time it requested Thursday. Instead of the six-month bailout extension it asked for, it's getting four — with Greece having to make big debt repayments after the new cut-off point, that's a sign that its creditors aren't willing to give Athens free rein.

Still, following weeks of tense negotiations in the wake of the election of the new left-wing Greek government, the final deal showed an element of compromise by both camps and investors appeared to breathe a sigh of relief with the Dow Jones index closed at a record high Friday as news of the Greek deal broke.

"This deal temporarily eases tensions and gives Greece breathing room to negotiate long term-debt relief," said Jay Jacobs, research analyst at Global X Funds. □

Rights groups blast alleged US-UK phone hack

SYLVIA HUI

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Rights organizations on Friday called for urgent steps to be taken to protect private calls and online communications after allegations that U.S. and British agencies hacked into the networks of a major SIM card maker.

The World Wide Web Foundation, founded by Web inventor Tim Berners-Lee, said the alleged hacking by the National Security Agency and its British counterpart, GCHQ, was "another worrying sign that these agencies think they are above

the law."

The claims of the hack into Netherlands-based company Gemalto came from documents given to journalists by whistleblower Edward Snowden. A story about the documents posted Thursday on the website The Intercept said the agencies hacked into Gemalto's networks to steal codes that allow both governments to seamlessly eavesdrop on mobile phones worldwide.

In an email to The Associated Press on Friday, GCHQ said it does not comment on intelligence matters. However, it said all of its

work was legal and its "interception regime" fully complies with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Privacy International, which recently won an unprecedented court victory against GCHQ in the wake of the Snowden revelations, said that the electronic eavesdropping agency had lost its way.

"In stealing the SIM card encryption keys of millions of mobile phone users they have shown there are few lines they aren't willing to cross," Privacy International Deputy Director Eric King said in a statement.

"Hacking into law-abiding companies, spying on their employees and stealing their data should never be considered 'fair game,'" he added. "Their actions have undermined the security of us all."

Yet hacking into law-abiding companies, and inducing foreigners to commit treason by spilling secrets, are standard practices of spy agencies throughout the world.

The U.S. and Britain happen to be more proficient than most. There is no international treaty laying out the rules of espionage, cyber or otherwise. □

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As ravaged Ukraine town regains peace, fear of war remains

PETER LEONARD
Associated Press

DEBALTSEVE, Ukraine (AP) —

Almost every building was gravely damaged, nearly every window smashed in this Ukrainian town left unrecognizable by months of relentless shelling. Children played in the rubble where their homes once stood, while neighbors boiled water in open fires as temperatures dipped below freezing.

Two days after government forces fled Debaltseve in disarray, leaving the Russian-backed separatists in total control of the strate-

gic town, all was quiet Friday.

Residents who could not or refused to flee came blinking out of makeshift shelters to soak up the rare winter sun. Across town, Cossack fighters rolled jubilantly away on commandeered trucks, tanks and armored vehicles, having secured another decisive victory for the rebels.

Yevgeniya Fomichova, whose gutted apartment was just three blocks away from a Ukrainian military encampment, said she and more than a dozen neighbors cowered in base-



Yevgeniya Fomichova, 60, carries food she cooked outside a damaged apartment building in Debaltseve, Ukraine, Friday, Feb. 20, 2015. After weeks of relentless fighting, the embattled Ukrainian rail hub of Debaltseve fell Wednesday to Russia-backed separatists, who hoisted a flag in triumph over the town.

(AP Photo/Vadim Ghirda)

ments for seven months. The nightly terror of shelling worsened in January as separatists massively intensified their onslaught.

"For a month we've had no bread and water," the 60-year-old said, adding that it had been weeks since she and her neighbors had bathed.

"Look at this, we are as filthy as devils," she said, trying to rub away the dirt on her soiled maroon coat. Behind her, a gaping hole left by a shell strike revealed the shattered remains of an apartment basement, much like the one in which she took refuge.

Debaltseve's ordeal had been expected to end with the cease-fire agreement forged last week by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France. Instead, the attacks intensified as the rebels moved to capture a town deemed strategically important for its role as a railway hub linking the two largest separat-

ist-held cities.

Reports of violations of the truce continued Friday.

A Ukrainian military spokesman said separatists fired on government positions nearly 50 times in the preceding 24 hours, while the rebels claimed that Ukrainian forces had violated the cease-fire 20 times.

The village of Kurakhovo, west of the rebel stronghold of Donetsk, was hit by Grad rockets and the village of Berdyansk, near the key port city of Mariupol, was hit overnight by artillery and mortar fire, said Lt. Col. Anatoliy Stelmakh, a Ukrainian military spokesman.

In Washington, Vice President Joe Biden condemned the rebel offensive in Debaltseve in a phone call with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, saying the separatists were directly supported by Russian troops in "blatant violation" of peace agreements. A White House statement said the lead-

ers also discussed ways the cease-fire deal can be monitored and the withdrawal of heavy weapons ensured.

At a crossroads along the highway to Debaltseve, Cossacks and other rebel fighters were shipping out Friday, taking captured Ukrainian armored vehicles and trucks with them. On the road out of town, sappers detonated anti-tank mines left behind by the retreating Ukrainian troops. Cossacks, who spearheaded imperial Russia's expansion and helped guard its far-flung outposts, trace their historic roots to both Ukraine and southern Russia. They faced persecution under Bolshevik rule but resurfaced after the 1991 Soviet collapse and are now recognized in Russia as an ethnic group who consider themselves descendants of the czarist-era horsemen.

Meanwhile, in Kiev, thousands gathered to mark the anniversary of the 2014 sniper shootings that killed more than 50 people, the bloodiest day of the months-long protests that led to the ouster of Ukraine's Russia-friendly president, Viktor Yanukovych. A month later, armed separatists began seizing buildings in the mainland east, sparking the war with government troops.

The war in eastern Ukraine has killed more than 5,600 people and forced over a million to flee their homes since fighting began in April, a month after Russia annexed Crimea. □



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Islamic State bombers kill dozens in Libyan suicide attacks

ESAM MOHAMED

MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — Islamic State militants unleashed suicide bombings Friday in eastern Libya, killing at least 40 people in what the group said was retaliation for Egyptian airstrikes against the extremists' aggressive new branch in North Africa.

The bombings in the town of Qubba, which is controlled by Libya's internationally recognized government, solidified concerns the extremist group has spread beyond the battlefields of Iraq and Syria and established a foothold less than 500 miles from the southern tip of Italy.

The militants have taken over at least two Libyan coastal cities on the Mediterranean — Sirte and Darna, which is about 30 kilometers (19 miles) from Qubba. They released a video Sunday that showed the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians who were abducted in Sirte, and Egypt responded Monday with airstrikes on Darna.

The Islamic State group has established its presence



A Libyan military soldier stands guard at the entrance of a town, 68 miles from Sirte, Libya.

(AP Photo/Mohamed Ben Khalifa)

in Libya by exploiting the country's breakdown since dictator Moammar Gadhafi was ousted and killed in 2011. Hundreds of militias have taken power since then, and some of them have militant ideologies. A militia coalition known as Libya Dawn has taken over Tripoli, where Islamists set up their own parliament and government. Islamic extremist militias controlled

the second-largest city of Benghazi until late last year, when army troops began battling them for control. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for Friday's suicide bombings in Qubba, but said there were only two attacks, while the government said there were three.

Army spokesman Mohammed Hegazi said one attacker rammed an explo-

sives-packed ambulance into a gas station where motorists were lined up.

"Imagine a car packed with a large amount of explosives striking a gas station; the explosion was huge and many of the injured are in very bad shape while the victims' bodies were torn into pieces," Hegazi said.

Two other bombers detonated vehicles next to the

house of the parliament speaker and the nearby security headquarters, he said.

Government spokesman Mohammed Bazaza put the death toll at 40, with at least 70 injured, some seriously. The number of dead was expected to rise. Two security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media said at least 45 were killed.

Among the dead were six Egyptians working at a cafe next to the gas station.

Video broadcast from the scene showed dozens of cars wrecked and ablaze, with pools of blood on the asphalt, along with body parts, shoes and shattered glass. Bodies covered in sheets were lined up nearby. The government and parliament announced a week of mourning.

"This terrorist, cowardly and desperate attack only increases our determination to uproot terrorism in Libya and in the region," Bazaza said, adding that Libyan air force jets conducted several airstrikes, without specifying where. □

Yemen's UN envoy says rival parties agree on new legislature

AHMED AL-HAJ

Associated Press

SANA, Yemen (AP) — The United Nations envoy to Yemen said Friday that rival factions, including the country's Shiite rebels, have agreed on a new legislative body to serve during the country's upcoming transition period.

Jamal Benomar said that the various parties have taken an "important step" toward a political resolution to the current crisis by creating a new legislative

body consisting of former and new lawmakers.

But a coalition of Yemeni parties voiced objections to the plan, describing it as an insufficient half-solution. Benomar says other issues, including the status of the presidency, remain on the table.

Yemen has been locked in a political crisis since Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, took over the capital in September. The rebels eventually forced the resignation of the elected West-

ern-backed president and dissolved the parliament.

U.S. State Department Spokeswoman Jen Psaki on Friday said her government was monitoring the situation. "We have seen these reports. We continue to support the special envoy's efforts to work with the parties to find a solution to the political crisis. And we're in regular contact with him and his team regarding the situation on the ground," Psaki said. "We don't have an analysis yet on what

it means, because we haven't seen implementation quite yet on it. And we are certainly clear-eyed, given the events of the last couple of weeks, of how that will be implemented or how it could be implemented, I should say."

The political crisis cast also doubts on the United States' ability to continue its counter-terrorism operations, especially with loss of a strong U.S. ally in President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who has been held

under house arrest by the Houthis since last month. However, the U.S. has continued to target al-Qaida's branch in Yemen, known as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, with drone strikes.

On Friday, tribal sources said that two suspected al-Qaida members were killed in a drone strike in the southern province of Shabwa. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press. □

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Venezuela: Arrest of Caracas mayor sign of broader crackdown

H. DREIER

J. GOODMAN

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

Opponents of President Nicolas Maduro poured into the streets Friday to condemn the surprise arrest of Caracas' mayor for allegedly participating in a U.S.-backed plot to overthrow his government.

An armed commando unit dressed in camouflage raided Mayor Antonio Ledezma's office late Thursday and hauled him away amid protests by his staff. The detention, recorded by security cameras, set off a wave of spontaneous demonstrations, with Venezuelans in middle-class enclaves loyal to the opposition banging pots and pans and blaring their car horns.

A few hundred supporters gathered peacefully Friday in eastern Caracas to denounce Ledezma's "kidnapping," which they likened to the illegal snatching of activists by South American military dictatorships in the 1970s.

Ledezma was expected to appear in court later Friday.

His lawyers said they had not yet been informed of the charges that will be levied against him.

The arrest of the 59-year-old mayor, one of Maduro's fiercest critics, comes as the government struggles to avert a crisis years in the making but made worse by a recent tumble in oil prices.

The president's approval rating was hovering

around 22 percent in January, the lowest in 16 years of socialist rule, as Venezuelans are forced to cope with widespread shortages, runaway inflation and a

several executives and handed more power to the military to control protests and smoke out saboteurs. However, the dire situation hasn't translated into sup-

dezma, pointing to a public letter he wrote with two other hardliners calling for a transitional government as evidence that a putsch is underway.



A supporter of Caracas Mayor Antonio Ledezma holds a poster of him with chains during a protest demanding his release in Caracas, Venezuela, Friday, Feb. 20, 2015.

(AP Photo/Alejandro Cegarra)

plunge in the currency that shows little sign of abating. Maduro has taken to the airwaves in recent days to rail against his opponents, accusing them of conspiring with the United States to sabotage the oil-dependent economy, sowing chaos and carry out a coup timed to coincide with the anniversary this month of 2014 anti-government protests that caused more than 40 deaths.

As part of the crackdown, he's also seized control of a major retail chain, jailed

port for the frequently outmaneuvered opposition. Turnout at Friday's demonstration was the largest for an anti-government rally in months but nowhere near the throngs that rocked cities a year ago, a sign of the steep challenge the opposition still faces connecting with voters ahead of legislative elections later this year that, if it carries, could pave for a recall referendum.

On Thursday night, Maduro went on national TV to denounce the "vampire" Le-

dezma, pointing to a public letter he wrote with two other hardliners calling for a transitional government as evidence that a putsch is underway.

The U.S., which this month expanded a travel ban on Venezuelan officials accused of human rights abuses and corruption, called the accusations "baseless and false."

While Ledezma's arrest may be the boldest action against his rivals. □

Brazil feds seek \$1.5B in Petrobras corruption case

BRAD BROOKS

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazilian federal prosecutors on Friday said they're seeking \$1.55 billion from six construction and engineering companies for their alleged involvement in a massive kickback scheme at state-run oil firm Petrobras.

The amount included \$111 million in compensation for public money prosecutors allege was stolen from Petrobras' coffers, along with \$333 million in fines and \$1.11 billion in punitive damages.

The action was the latest aggressive step by federal prosecutors, who say they've uncovered the biggest corruption scheme in Brazil's history.

The scandal has seriously damaged the reputation of Petrobras, the nation's biggest company and long a source of national pride.

However, Petrobras' star has fallen hard in recent years: It's mired in debt; lost billions in market value; been virtually locked out of international credit markets; and has yet to make good on its promise to rapidly develop massive offshore oil finds discovered in the past six years. Upward of 100 billion barrels of oil are thought to lie in deep-water basins off Brazil's coast, riches leaders repeatedly have said they're counting on to propel the nation to developed-world status and fund ambitious education and health projects. □

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Celebrations at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba? You Bet!



costumes inspired by their own creativity. The event was very animated with a colorful Carnival atmosphere. Congratulations to the winners and the participants, who were each honored with a lovely gift from The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba. □



minutes a winner was randomly picked, who won from \$10 to \$50 Slot Cash just by picking a beautiful red rose! Congratulations to all the winners!

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba also had the honor during their Sunday Bingo to host a Carnival competition of Best Costume and Best Headpiece in honor of Aruba's Carnival #61! The Casino was very happy with all the visitors that came with masquerade headpieces and



PALM BEACH - Love was in the air at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba during Valentine's Day with plenti-

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EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a nice group of guests whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Divi Phoenix Beach Resort, as Distinguished Visitors and Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit

Aruba for 10-to-19 and 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees included Frank Siciliano of New Jersey, Ann Marie & Anthony Cellucci of Massachusetts, Jolie & David Harvey and David Harvey Jr. of New York, John Romeo from New Jersey, Joan & Dennis Singh of Canada, and Jennie & Stephen Berlin of Pennsylvania. The honorees are loyal members of the

Divi Phoenix Beach Resort and they love the Island very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants and the diversity of the island. Aruba feels like a second home and the people are like a family to them. The certificate was presented by the Aruba Tourism Authority in the presence of many friends and resort associates! □





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Maria Onni's Creative Explosion: Vibrant Caribbean colors make Sidebar Bistro's giant wall shine

ORANJESTAD - A mural, covering some 50 square meters inside Sidebar restaurant, is something you shouldn't miss: it is an explosion of the colors of the Caribbean, depicting a magic garden filled with flowers, birds, a totem pole and funny, alien-looking, beer-drinking, hamburger-eating male

elves. The colors ochre, pink, turquoise, bright green and orange 'happify' the wall of the restaurant: an unbeatable combination when you savor its fantastic gourmet hamburgers, tasty salads, ice cold beers and aged bourbons. Don't drive past Sidebar Bistro, but park your car on the Re-

naissance Marketplace parking downtown and come inside to enjoy Maria's mural and to pamper your other senses as well. Painter Maria Onni (33) was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina; she came to Aruba on the wings of love when she was just 20 years old. After her divorce, she started selling her original artwork and she was over the moon when Sidebar owner Niels Stooten asked her to paint a mural for his new restaurant. "He gave me carte blanche," Maria tells with a big smile. "I had a blueprint of what he wanted, made by his architect Arjen Coster from Holland, but I needed a free hand to be able to explore my creativity for this huge project."

It took Maria and her team three weeks to finish the mural. She started with a background of orange

with yellow lights and she outlined the basic main figures like the flowers, the birds, the centipede and the elf-figurines. Sometimes her friend and fellow artist Mariana Luna came to help; at other times she directed five people. Maria worked on the mural during late afternoons and early evenings when the workmen were gone, closely watched by Niels. After it was finished, Niels told Maria that he had taken a big chance with this project, but that he was very happy with the result.

The mural incorporates several aspects of life on Aruba: there is the central totem pole with the shoko, the island's cute, endemic owl. "I used a totem pole to indicate the link with Aruba's Indian history and spiritual side. Then there are fantasy flowers in various colors, a tru-

al, our orange-breasted blackbird, an iguana and a toy-like centipede," explains Maria. Lots of bottles, one of them Angels Envy, a superb bourbon that you can get here, are depicted on the wall as well as the funny elf-like, alien little man that is eating a hamburger, guzzling a Balashi beer and climbing a cactus to reach a bottle.

Are you curious and do you want to see if for yourself? No problem; go to Sidebar Bistro, have breakfast, lunch, drinks or dinner there and let Maria's Caribbean mural lift your mood sky-high. It's definitely worth your visit! Sidebar Bistro is open daily from 8am till midnight and on Friday and Saturdays they stay open till 1am. Sidebar is located at Renaissance Marketplace across from Ocean Suites downtown. □



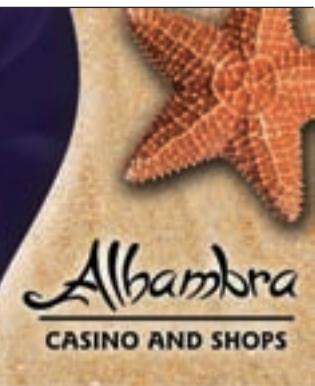


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Roel is the Piano Player who plays all your favorite songs, while you enjoy your dinner or drinks. Roel arrived in Aruba at the beginning of this year to explore his opportunities as a piano man. After a couple months he finally found what he was looking for at Barney's Bar & Restaurant: a fun and casual place where he is the main entertainment. He plays Thursday through Saturday from 7pm till 10.30pm.

With Ron behind the bar and Eline taking care of the guests on the floor you know they have put their heart and soul into this new venture of theirs.



Open Monday through Saturday from 5pm till 12am, the kitchen is open from 5pm till 11pm where you will find great specials each evening which include a "Bar Bite" for \$10, a daily soup and a daily main

course special. Recently they started with **Monday night All You Can Eat Fajitas** for \$19.50. You can choose grouper, chicken and beef, and they are served with all the classics, including guacamole, sour cream, salsa and warm soft tortilla's. It's a big hit for young and old.

Tuesday night is **Schnitzel Night** where you can choose chicken or pork, and it includes a variety of preparations along with a choice of sauces, for only \$17.50. Wednesday night has become very popular

choice for only \$19.50.

Thursday night is the **Famous All You Can Eat BBQ Ribs** for only \$19.50 that will have you licking all the sauce off of your fingers because you had to pick up the meat that fell off of the bone! It's no surprise they got the award for Best Ribs in Aruba!

Saturday night is **All You Can Eat Steak**, which is so tender and juicy that it melts in your mouth, and is served with salad, Cole Slaw and French fries for \$21.50

The regular menu is filled with a choice of delicious appetizers and main courses, no doubt you will find something to satisfy your taste buds.

Dietary restrictions are never a problem, just let your waitress know and Chef Jan and his team will make sure you are taken care of!

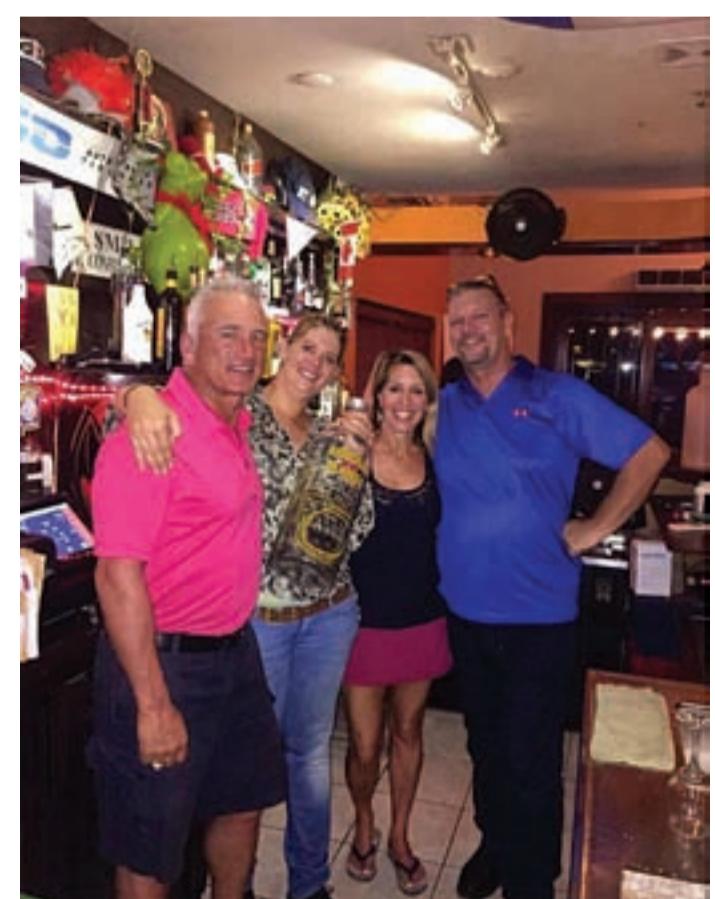
Friday night is **All You Can Eat Sliders**, which are little burgers, you get 5 differ-

ent ones like steak, cheeseburger, chorizo, fried chicken and grouper all served with Cole Slaw and French fries for \$19.50. Also be prepared to entertain or be entertained, as it is Karaoke Night where everyone gathers to sing starting around 10pm until late into the morning. Shy? No worries, Ron will get you going with one of their favorite Dutch songs! Chef Jan will serenade his finance with his rendition of "Blueberry Hill" and Ron & Eline will sing some love songs to each other throughout the night. Besides the great food and service, you will find an extensive bar filled with all your favorite drinks including great wines by the glass. The prices are so reasonable that every hour is "Happy Hour" at Barney's Bar & Restaurant!

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for fish lovers because it's **Grouper Night**, when you can choose from 4 different kinds of Groupers, from Dutch Grouper to French or Italian and Spanish, all served with fresh vegetables and a side of your



SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



Tiger Woods watches United States' Lindsey Vonn race during the women's giant slalom competition at the alpine skiing world championships on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015, in Beaver Creek, Colo.

Associated Press

Nicklaus says Woods needs 'positive thing' to happen

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jack Nicklaus isn't ruling out Tiger Woods breaking his record of 18 major championships provided he re-discovers his game.

Nicklaus said Friday on Golf Channel that Woods will have to do that on his own. "You go through things, and you have to have a positive thing happen to you to turn it around," Nicklaus said. "I think Tiger will turn it around. He's too dedicated, he works too hard at it, he's got too much talent. He'll figure it out. And personally, I think he needs to figure it out himself. Because a teacher can't teach what's inside your head. You've got to be able to put that positive thought into your head yourself."

Continued on Next Page



Woods

Continued from Page 17

Woods, coming off an injury-plagued season that caused him to miss two majors, the FedEx Cup playoffs and the Ryder Cup, began his 2015 campaign with a career-high 82 to miss the cut in the Phoenix Open and withdrawing after 11 holes at Torrey Pines with tightness in his lower back. He said the tightness was not related to the back surgery he had last spring that kept him out a combined seven months. Woods decided not to play the Honda Classic next week and said he won't return until his game is ready for tournament competition.

"Tiger is struggling. I don't think there's any question about that," Nicklaus said. "I think he's struggling more between his ears than he is any place else. He's struggled with the driver most of his life really, but he's always been able to find the golf ball and get



Tiger Woods, left, watches United States' Lindsey Vonn, right, during the women's giant slalom competition at the alpine skiing world championships on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015, in Beaver Creek, Colo.

Associated Press

it somewhere back around the green.

"And now he's having trou-

ble with the short game," he added. "That is not

a good combination, to

drive it poorly and have a bad short game."

Nicklaus spoke on Golf

Channel from Doral, site of the Cadillac Championship. The Jack Nicklaus Villa at Trump National Doral was unveiled on Friday.

Woods has been linked to Nicklaus for his entire career, mainly because of the benchmark Nicklaus established with his 18 professional majors. As a kid, he had a chart taped up in his bedroom of what Nicklaus accomplished at various ages as an amateur. Woods won his 14th major in the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines, a week before he had reconstructive knee surgery. He was ahead of pace then, but he has gone six years without winning a major, and he hasn't played in six majors since his last victory because of injuries.

Nicklaus said he still thinks Woods will eclipse his record, a question the Golden Bear has been asked more than any other over the years. He once joked about the headlines he would create if he ever answered, "No." □

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Driftwood Restaurant. This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their

extended menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 4-course menu for just \$25.95. **Charter deep sea fishing rates:** \$400 - 1/2 day • \$760 - full day. Rates per boat Max. 6 people. **Driftwood Restaurant** Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant; Klipstraat #12, Downtown Oranjestad. Tel: (297) 583 2515 www.driftwoodaruba.com Open hours: every day, from 5pm till 10:30pm. Sunday Closed.

NHL Capsules

Surging Isles end Predators' 6-game run

The Associated Press

UNIONDALE, New York (AP)

— Nick Leddy had a goal and two assists, Jaroslav Halak tied the team record for wins in a season, and the New York Islanders cooled off the NHL-leading Nashville Predators with a 5-2 win on Thursday night. Brian Strait, John Tavares and Johnny Boychuk scored in the first for the Islanders, who snapped Nashville's six-game winning streak with their sixth victory in seven games. Tavares has at least one goal in each of his last four games.

Leddy and Josh Bailey scored 1:39 apart in the third period to break open a one-goal nail biter. Halak made 30 saves for his 32nd win.

Filip Forsberg and James Neal scored for the Predators. Pekka Rinne had a rare off night, allowing five goals on 40 shots.

The Islanders lost center Mikhail Grabovski for the game with 11:21 left in the first when he was leveled by a shoulder from Eric Nystrom. A stretcher was brought onto the ice, but Grabovski skated off on his own after being down for several minutes. He sustained an unspecified upper-body injury.

BLUE JACKETS 2, PENGUINS 1

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Brandon Dubinsky poked a pass from Matt Calvert past a sprawled Marc-Andre Fleury with 2:17 remaining, sending Columbus to the road win.

Pittsburgh's Blake Comeau turned it over and the Blue Jackets quickly pounced. Calvert fed Dubinsky as Pittsburgh's Steve Downie ran over Fleury. Dubinsky had little trouble tapping in his seventh goal of the season.

Scott Hartnell also scored for Columbus. Curtis McElhinney stopped 29 shots as the Blue Jackets won their second straight.

Evgeni Malkin picked up his 22nd goal for Pittsburgh. Captain Sidney Crosby



New York Islanders Michael Grabner, left, celebrates with New York Islanders defenseman Johnny Boychuk (55) and New York Islanders defenseman Nick Leddy (2) after Boychuk scored the Islanders second goal in the first period of an NHL hockey game against the Nashville Predators at Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, N.Y., Thursday, Feb. 19, 2015.

Associated Press

was held without a point, though he tussled with Dubinsky in the second period. It was the seventh fight of Crosby's 10-year career.

SHARKS 5, STARS 2

DALLAS (AP) — Andrew Desjardins scored two second-period goals, and San Jose held on for the win. Antti Niemi made 37 saves for the Sharks, who had lost two straight. The victory vaulted them into a tie for seventh place in the Western Conference with Calgary, tied for third in the Pacific Division.

The Stars had won four of their previous five games. They fell six points behind Calgary and San Jose in the race for the final wild-card berth.

Marc-Edouard Vlasic scored the Sharks' first goal. Patrick Marleau and Tommy Wingels scored into an empty net after Dallas cut a 3-0 deficit to 3-2 on goals by Trevor Daley and Erik Cole.

CAPITALS 5, JETS 1

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nicklas Backstrom scored two second-period goals and had an assist, and Washington won for the fourth

time in five games.

Capitals star Alex Ovechkin added his league-leading

38th goal and an assist. Troy Brouwer had an empty-net goal and an assist, and

John Carlson also scored. Backstrom, who has 16 assists in his past 16 games, moved into a tie with Chicago's Patrick Kane atop the NHL scoring list with 63 points.

Toby Enstrom scored for Winnipeg, which had won four of five, and Ondrej Pavelec made 28 saves.

CANUCKS 5, RANGERS 4, SO

NEW YORK (AP) — Alexandre Burrows and Radim Vrbata scored in the shootout, and Vancouver stopped New York's four-game winning streak.

Henrik Sedin scored twice for the Canucks, including a tying tally on a rebound with 2:00 left in regulation after Vancouver pulled goaltender Ryan Miller.

Miller finished with 30 saves, and he stopped Mats Zuccarello and Derek Stepan in the shootout. Shawn Matthias and Bo Horvat also scored as Vancouver snapped a five-game losing streak against the Rangers dating to January 2011. □

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Raiders, Chargers plan possible shared L.A.-area home

ANDREW DALTON
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Oakland Raiders and San Diego Chargers are planning a shared stadium in the Los Angeles area if both teams fail to get new stadium deals in their current hometowns.

The two teams made the announcement in a joint statement Thursday, adding another layer of complexity to a possible NFL return to the region.

The proposed \$1.7-billion stadium would be in Carson, 24 kilometers (15 miles) south of downtown Los Angeles and home to the Los Angeles Galaxy MLS team. "We are pursuing this stadium option in Carson for one straightforward reason," the statement said. "If we cannot find a permanent solution in our home markets, we have no alternative but to preserve other options to guarantee the future economic viability of our franchises."

The plan creates the odd



In this Sunday, Nov. 16, 2014 file photo, The Oakland Raiders and San Diego Chargers face off against each other during the second half of an NFL football game in San Diego.

Associated Press

prospect of divisional rivals sharing a home field, and of Los Angeles having two NFL teams after going two decades with none.

And it furthers muddles the issue of the NFL's return to Southern California, with at least three viable stadium plans in the works.

St. Louis Rams owner Stan Kroenke is part of a joint venture to build an 80,000-seat stadium at the site of

the former Hollywood Park horse track in Inglewood.

And a plan remains alive for an NFL facility in downtown Los Angeles. That stadium known as Farmers Field, until recently the leading candidate for the NFL's return, now becomes a long shot with multiple competitors and no clear team attached.

Earlier this month, the NFL sent a memo warning

teams that the league itself will be behind any decision to move to Southern California, and established a committee of owners to review the options.

The Chargers and Raiders statement says they will respect and adhere to the guidelines the league laid out. Both teams said they plan to work in good faith through 2015 to find new agreements to stay in their current homes.

The Chargers' talks with San Diego City Hall to replace the nearly 50-year-old Qualcomm Stadium have grown increasingly contentious. Mayor Kevin Faulconer appointed an advisory group earlier this month to recommend a site and financing plan for a new stadium that can go on the November 2016 ballot. But Chargers' attorney Mark Fabiani told the group that there may not be a publicly acceptable solution to the problem and warned them against using the team for political advantage.

The Raiders are in the final year of their lease at the even older Oakland Coliseum. The rundown stadium had sewage and electrical problems in the past year and is now the only stadium in the US used as the home for both an NFL and Major League Baseball team, the Oakland Athletics. The team wants to build a new stadium at the site but talks with the city have shown little progress.

The Rams have been in a similar struggle with St. Louis, but have made progress with a burgeoning plan for a 64,000-seat stadium there on the city's north riverfront. "Our focus is 100 percent committed to keeping the Rams here in their home of St. Louis and ensuring that we remain an NFL city for generations to come," said former Anheuser-Busch president Dave Peacock, who is heading effort to keep the Rams in St. Louis. "We are very encouraged and thrilled with the progress we've made." □

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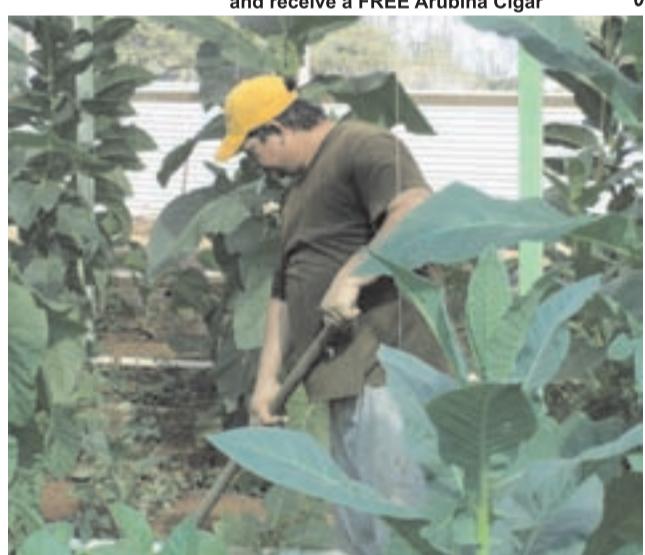
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

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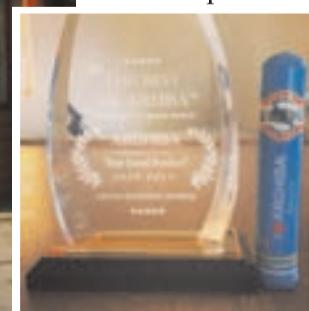
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Owner Benjamin Petrocchi



NBA Capsules

Clips hang on to beat Spurs 119-115 in tight 4th quarter

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- DeAndre Jordan had 26 points and 18 rebounds, Jamal Crawford added 26 points and the Los Angeles Clippers beat San Antonio 119-115 Thursday night, increasing their lead over the Spurs by 1 1/2 games in the West.

Chris Paul had 22 points and 16 assists, and the Clippers outscored the Spurs 56-46 in the paint despite the absence of Blake Griffin, who is recovering from right elbow surgery.

Crawford and Paul came up with huge baskets in the final 32 seconds, with the Clippers clinging to one-point leads both times. Crawford took a pass from Paul and made a 3-pointer from the right corner.

Marco Belinelli answered

with a 3 that drew the Spurs to 115-114.

Paul hit a 16-footer with 8 seconds to go that kept the Clippers ahead by three. J.J. Redick made a pair of free throws to close

out the win.

Thunder 104, Mavericks 89

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - Russell Westbrook had 34 points and 10 assists for the Thunder. Serge Ibaka had 21 points and a ca-



Los Angeles Clippers forward Glen Davis, right, shoots as San Antonio Spurs center Boris Diaw, of France, defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Thursday, Feb. 19, 2015, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

reer-high 22 rebounds and

reserve guard Anthony Morrow added 16 points for the Thunder, who won for the sixth time in seven games. They moved into a tie with Phoenix for eighth place in the Western Conference.

The Thunder rolled, despite getting just 12 points from Kevin Durant, who is still bothered by pain in his

right foot.

Dirk Nowitzki had 14 points and Tyson Chandler added 10 points and 13 rebounds for the Mavericks, who shot a season-low 36.3 percent from the field. Dallas point guard Rajon Rondo returned after missing six games with broken bones in his face. He finished with five points and six assists in 30 minutes. □



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SAT 2:10 | 4:55 | 7:40 | 10:25
SUN & HOL 2:10 | 4:55 | 7:40
MON-FRI 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20
SAT 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20
SUN & HOL 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20

DAKOTA JOHNSON | JAMIE DORNAN

FIFTY SHADES OF GREY



MON-FRI 4:10 | 6:50 | 9:35
SAT, SUN & HOL 4:10 | 6:50 | 9:35
MON-THURS 5:00 | 7:45
FRI 5:00 | 7:45 | 10:20
SAT SAT 2:15 | 5:00 | 7:45 | 10:20
SUN & HOL 2:15 | 5:00 | 7:45

CHRIS EVANS | MICHELLE MONAGHAN

PLAYING IT COOL



MON-THURS 9:10
FRI-SAT 9:10 | 11:15
SUN & HOL 9:10

ANTONIO BANDERAS | TOM KENNY

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3D VERSION
MON-FRI 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:35
SAT 2:10 | 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:35
SUN & HOL 2:10 | 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:35
2D VERSION
MON-FRI 5:00 | 7:05
SAT 2:55 | 5:00 | 7:05
SUN & HOL 2:55 | 5:00 | 7:05

CHANNING TATUM | MILA KUNIS

JUPITER ASCENDING 3D

3D VERSION
FRI-SAT 10:45
2D VERSION
MON-FRI 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20
SAT, SUN & HOL 3:50 | 6:35 | 9:20

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TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Chris Bosh of the Miami Heat underwent testing at a hospital Thursday to assess a medical issue related to the area around his lungs, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press.

Bosh and the team were expecting to have a better grasp of the situation Friday, said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because neither the player nor the team had disclosed any specifics publicly.

It was unclear if Bosh was admitted to the hospital, or simply underwent testing.

Miami plays at New York on Friday. Bosh did not fly with the team Thursday. Bosh was not feeling well and was sent home by the team from practice Wednesday. Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said at Thursday afternoon's practice, when Bosh



In this Dec. 7, 2014, file photo, Miami Heat center Chris Bosh warms up before an NBA basketball game against the Memphis Grizzlies in Memphis, Tenn. Associated Press

was missing again, that he remained "under the weather" but offered no specifics on his condition. Bosh is averaging 21.1 points and 7.0 rebounds this season. He signed a five-year contract worth just over \$118 million last summer, and played Sunday in the All-Star Game in New York — his 10th appearance in the NBA's showcase game. Bosh said before the All-

Star break that he was looking forward to some time off to rest and recover from some nagging issues, though did not specify what those were.

He and wife Adrienne vacationed with Heat teammate Dwyane Wade and his wife, Gabrielle Union, in Haiti this week, but Bosh's medical issue was something that he was dealing with well before that trip began.

"He wasn't feeling good," Wade said Thursday afternoon. "I don't know what it was. He just wasn't feeling good overall." □

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MLB makes small pace of game changes, passes on bigger steps

By RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Major League Baseball is slowly addressing the lagging pace of games.

MLB and the players' association announced an agreement Friday to enforce the rule requiring a hitter to keep at least one foot in the batter's box in many cases. MLB also will post stadium clocks timing pitching changes and between-inning breaks starting in spring training, and it no longer will require managers to always come onto the field when they request video reviews by umpires.

But the sides limited penalties to fines and not automatic balls and strikes, and even the fines don't start until May 1.

Many of the more radical ideas experimented with during the Arizona Fall League were not adopted, such as a 20-second clock between pitches, a limitation of pitcher's mound conferences involving catchers and managers, and no-pitch intentional walks.

Still, even the modest changes are too much for players, used to their routines and reluctant to alter them.

"If you rush a hamburger, it's not going to be completely done. There are going to be too many mistakes. You're going to rush the game. It would just be terrible. I don't think there needs to be a time limit," Miami Marlins pitcher Mat

nearly a decade. In February 2005, the batter's box rule was announced as an experiment in the minor leagues.

Still, the average time of nine-inning games increased to a record 3 hours, 2 minutes last year,



In this May 14, 2014, file photo, Boston Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz prepares to bat during the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Minnesota Twins in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

Latos said.

Said Chicago White Sox outfielder Adam Eaton: "I'm not a big fan. There's a lot of thinking involved. When a pitcher steps on the rubber, there's a lot going on. There's thinking in the dugout, the coaches, everyone. Why speed that up?"

Baseball has been contemplating the issue for

up from 2:33 in 1981.

Detroit Tigers ace Justin Verlander says the change will be tougher on batters than pitchers.

"I hope it screws up their whole rhythm and everything," he said, jokingly. MLB cannot make unilateral changes to playing rules without the consent of the players' union unless it gives one year prior

notice, so an agreement was necessary for any 2015 alterations. The World Umpires Association also approved.

"The players believe that enforcing the rules that currently exist regarding between-inning breaks and plate appearances is the best way to address the issue of pace of play," union head Tony Clark said in a statement. "We're confident that today's announcements will have a positive impact on the pace of the game without jeopardizing the integrity of the competition."

The pitch clock will be used in the minor leagues at Double-A and Triple-A, where union approval isn't needed.

MLB said it is likely to announce only fines involving repeat flagrant violators. In the AFL, strikes and balls were called as penalties, and the average game time was reduced by 10 minutes.

The rule requiring hitter's keep a foot in the box contains many exceptions, including swinging at a pitch, getting forced out by a pitch, calling time, faking a bunt and wild pitches and passed balls.

"I think it's something that's going to take some time,"

San Diego Padres catcher Derek Norris said. "You've got guys playing for seven, eight years that have always stepped out of the box and taken a practice swing."

Clocks will be installed on or near outfield scoreboards and on facades behind home plate, near most press boxes. Inning breaks will be counted down from 2:25 for locally televised games and 2:45 for nationally televised games. Pitchers must throw their last warmup pitches before 30 seconds remaining, with exceptions if the pitcher or catcher is on base when the previous half-inning ends.

"These changes represent a step forward in our efforts to streamline the pace of play," said Rob Manfred, who took over from Bud Selig as commissioner last month. "The most fundamental starting point for improving the pace of the average game involves getting into and out of breaks seamlessly."

MLB will make a donation to the union's charitable foundation based on compliance with the new rules. The sides also announced changes for the second season of expanded video review by umpires. □



Francois Pervis of France compete during the final of the Men's 1Km Time Trail race at the Track Cycling World Championships in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, outside Paris, France, Friday, Feb. 20, 2015.

Associated Press

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France (AP) — Frenchman Francois Pervis successfully defended his 1-kilometer time trial title to claim a second gold medal in as many days at

the track cycling worlds on Friday.

Pervis, who also retained his keirin title on Thursday at the Velodrome National, won in 1 minute 0.207 seconds ahead of

Pervis wins second gold medal at track cycling worlds

German Joachim Eilers to give France its third gold of these world championships after the men's team sprint on the opening day of competition.

Eilers finished in 1:00.294 to edge Matthew Archibald of New Zealand, who took bronze in 1:00.470.

Former triathlete Rebecca Wiasak of Australia won the women's individual pursuit by defeating Jennifer Valente of the United States in the final, and Arthur Ershov of Russia won the men's 40-kilometer points race.

The 30-year-old Wiasak, who switched to track in 2011, won in 3 minutes, 30.305 seconds. Amy Cure,

a member of the Australian team which won gold in the team pursuit on Thursday, took bronze by defeating Briton Joanna Roswell in the final for third place.

Pervis, the world record holder in the 1-kilometer, is bidding to defend the three gold medals he won at the 2014 world championships. He will also compete in Sunday's individual sprint event.

Pervis, who thought about withdrawing from the competition following a bout of illness over the winter, claimed a third world title in his favorite event and his sixth gold medal overall.

"I checked on the internet

this morning and I realized that with five individual world titles I was level with my elders Florian Rousseau and Arnaud Tournant, who were the sprint leaders in France when I started at the French Institute of Sports and taught me everything," said Pervis, who did not make the cut for the 2012 Olympics. "I had the chance to overtake them, and I did it. It's good to break records, I love it."

Although he appeared exhausted after the brutal effort in front of his home crowd, Pervis will be the favorite of the sprint despite the short recovery time ahead of Saturday's qualifying. □

Doctors say fitness trackers, health apps can boost care

ANICK JESDANUN
AP Technology Writer

HACKENSACK, N.J. (AP) — That phone app keeping track of your exercise and meals might keep you out of the hospital one day.

Why give your doctors permission to incorporate data from fitness trackers and health apps into electronic patient records? Well, they might spot signs of an ailment sooner and suggest behavioral changes or medication before you land in the emergency room. They also might be able to monitor how you're healing from surgery or whether you're following a treatment regimen.

"Right now we only see our patients for about a 15-minute visit in the office, and it's a very constricted view," said Dr. Lauren Koniaris, a specialist in pulmonary critical care at Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey. "This really globalizes the view of their health status, so that we're really in contact with them on a much more daily if not hour-to-hour basis. It's almost like a virtual house call."

At Hackensack, a handful of patients at risk for heart failure are asked to use a fitness tracker to count steps walked and flights climbed. They are also asked to record what they eat — by photographing the product's bar code, for instance — using a phone app that has a database containing nutrition information on thousands of food items. Using Apple's new HealthKit technology, data from the various trackers and apps gets automatically transferred to the Epic MyChart app on the iPhone. From there, the information goes to the hospital's records system, which also comes from Epic.

Hackensack wants to expand to more patients and start tracking blood pressure and sleep quality, too. But the hospital first needs to ensure that teams are in place to review the glut of data coming in. More broadly, there

are consumer privacy and security issues to address, along with questions about whether these trackers and apps really improve patient care. The University of California, San Francisco is studying which gadgets

"If we're going to succeed in improving health, we have to get patients more engaged in their care," said Dr. Richard Milani, a cardiologist at Ochsner. Heart-attack patients have long been asked to

For now, developers must write separate code for each Android or Windows app to integrate.

Gary Wilhelm, 51, who works at Hackensack on payroll and finance technology, joined the hospi-

on flights climbed and cholesterol intake. There were a few bad days that Wilhelm blamed on the Super Bowl. Timmapuri instructed Wilhelm to monitor his pulse on his new Fitbit Surge. If it gets to about 155 beats per minute, he's to end his workout.

"Even if I did not do a single thing with the information, just the patient knowing that I'm reviewing it will already have a positive effect," Timmapuri said.

Mayo patient Randy Smothers, 62, of Chisago City, Minnesota, agrees. He said he was in pain after getting his right hip replaced and would have stayed on his couch without the knowledge that someone was checking on him.

"This pedometer they gave me made me walk every day and move on and get going," he said.

Apps and trackers could ultimately reduce patient visits, though there's a risk patients would practice self-care.

"It may be an aid or a tool to help me deliver better care, but it is just a tool," said Dr. Robert Wergin, president of the American Academy of Family Physicians. "It shouldn't substitute for a face-to-face visit." □



In this Thursday, Feb. 5, 2015 photograph, cardiologist Dr. Sarah Timmapuri, left, looks at data on a smart phone synchronized to a new Fitbit Surge worn by patient Gary Wilhelm, 51, during an examination, in Hackensack, N.J. **Associated Press**

are reliable and whether that reliability extends to patients with extreme conditions. Then they have to figure out what information is really meaningful — not just noise.

Many doctors and hospitals see potential. The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, uses Fitbit trackers to monitor hip-replacement patients for a month after surgery. Health workers get data on daily steps and can tell when patients have trouble walking — a hundred or more miles away. The Ochsner Health System in New Orleans is turning to wireless scales and blood-pressure devices to help reduce readmissions for chronic diseases such as heart failure. Noticing a small weight gain, for instance, might reveal fluid buildup resulting from the heart failing to pump normally. Not only can doctors intervene sooner, they can use the data to show how exercise can help lower blood pressure.

weigh themselves, while those with diabetes have had to check glucose levels. Smartphone technology makes all that easier and gets measurements to doctors more regularly and reliably. There's no forgetting to record a number or transposing digits.

With Apple's HealthKit tools, disparate gadgets and records systems can work together more easily. Think of HealthKit as a common language, eliminating the need for translators. Beyond sleep and exercise data coming from fitness trackers, doctors can eventually incorporate devices that measure glucose, blood pressure, respiratory rates and blood-oxygen levels. The devices communicate with the iPhone wirelessly or through the headphone or charging port. Google, Samsung and Microsoft have similar ambitions that will expand monitoring to users of Android and Windows phones, though they aren't as far along.

tal's app test after he suffered a heart attack in October. He appeared animated during a check-up this month as he showed Dr. Sarah Timmapuri, his cardiologist, various charts

YouTube to release kids app to ease parents' worries

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)

- YouTube is going to release a mobile app that will only show video clips suitable for young children to help parents control what their kids are watching on the Internet.

The YouTube for Kids app scheduled to be released Monday will only work on smartphones and tablets running on Android, the software made by YouTube owner Google Inc. A version compatible with the

iOS software powering Apple Inc.'s iPhone and iPad may be released in the upcoming months.

The app features thousands of kid-focused channels that provide both entertainment and education. The content is mostly tailored for children ranging from two to eight years old.

Ads will be shown with some of the clips to help funnel more revenue to Google, one of the world's most profitable companies. □

Wall Street hits new highs on Greece loan extension

KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A deal giving Greece more time to repay its debts swung the U.S. stock market higher Friday and drove the stock market to a record high. While expected, the deal between the struggling country and its European creditors left investors relieved. Any failure to reach an accord could have sent tremors through markets at a time when Europe is trying to revive its regional economy.

"It's good this didn't go down to the wire to get resolved," said Paul Christopher, head of international strategy at Wells Fargo.

Stocks started off the day solidly lower. The Dow Jones industrial average fell as much as 107 points. But as rumors and news came out that Greece and its creditors were close to a deal, the market climbed ever-so-steadily higher. The euro also gained against the dollar.

The Dow finished up 154.67 points, or 0.9 percent, to 18,140.44. The Standard & Poor's 500 index climbed 12.85 points, or 0.6 percent, to 2,110.30 and the Nasdaq composite rose 31.27 points, or 0.6 percent, to 4,955.97.

The Dow closed at a record



Trader Kevin Lodewick works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. A deal giving Greece more time to repay its debts swung the U.S. stock market higher Friday and drove the stock market to a record high.

high, surpassing its record close on Dec. 26. The S&P 500 also closed at record high.

The Nasdaq, which has yet to reclaim its record high from the dot-com era, is now within 93 points of that March 2000 peak.

In Brussels, the deal reached between the European Union and Greece's recently elected government would extend the country's repayment plan by four months. That is shorter than the six months originally re-

quested by Greece. In return, Greece has committed to not pursue any "unilateral" measures that might affect the country's budget targets. Greece has committed to provide a list of reforms based on its current bailout program for assessment by Monday.

The deal is a shift from only a day ago, where it seemed like Greece and its creditors were still struggling to reach a basic agreement for the Mediterranean country.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

Without the agreement, Greece would have only about a week left before it would default on its obligations and cause it to drop the euro currency.

Greece's economy is small, but the potential disruption Greece could have to the global financial system potentially could be huge. In a worst-case scenario, Greece abandoning the euro could embolden political parties in other debt-ridden countries to seek to leave the euro as well.

"A Greek exit is not good for anyone, including the Greeks," said Christopher of Wells Fargo. "If Greece leaves, everyone else could leave and you're left with nothing."

In energy markets, the price of oil fell Friday after a closely-watched count of drilling rigs declined less than expected. That could mean crude supplies will remain ample.

Benchmark U.S. crude fell 82 cents to close at \$50.34 a barrel in New York on the last day of trading for the March contract. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils used by many U.S. refineries, rose one cent to close at \$60.22 in London.

In other futures trading, wholesale gasoline rose 2.5 cents to close at \$1.641 a gallon. Heating oil rose 11.8 cents to close at \$2.112 a gallon. Natural gas rose 11.7 cents to close at \$2.951 per 1,000 cubic feet.

The U.S. dollar rose to 119.09 yen from 119.04 yen the previous session, while the euro rose against the dollar to \$1.1379 compared with \$1.1368 Thursday.

Gold fell \$2.70 to \$1,204.90 an ounce, silver fell 11 cents to \$16.30 an ounce and high-grade copper fell 3 cents to \$2.59 a pound. □

Nasdaq gains for eighth straight day, nearing dot-com high

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Nasdaq composite rose for an eighth straight day Friday, pushing the index closer to its all-time closing high. The index climbed with the overall stock market after Greece and its creditors in the eurozone reached an agreement on the country's request to extend its bailout. The news was seen as positive by investors because it reduces the risk of Greece leaving the euro, a move that has the potential to send shockwaves throughout global financial markets.

After gaining nearly 7 percent in February, the Nasdaq is now less than 2 percent from its record close of



Electronic billboards are reflected in the windows of Nasdaq in New York. The Nasdaq composite rose for an eighth straight day Friday, Feb. 20, 2015, pushing the index closer to its all-time closing high.

(AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

5,048.62, a benchmark set during the frenzy of the dot-com era in March 2000. On Friday, the Nasdaq added 31.27 points, or 0.6 percent, to 4,955.97. Its eight-day win streak matches its longest stretch of gains since February 2014. The technology-heavy index, which tracks the 2,500-plus stocks that are listed on the Nasdaq stock market, has advanced 4.6 percent this year, and is up 16 percent in the last year.

Almost half the companies in the index are technology stocks, and the Nasdaq is outperforming both the Dow Jones industrial average and the Standard & Poor's 500 index this year, as the technology sector is coming back in favor. □

Fannie Mae posts \$1.3B 4Q profit; paying \$1.9B dividend

MARCY GORDON

AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mortgage giant Fannie Mae reported net income of \$1.3 billion for the fourth quarter. That's down sharply from \$6.5 billion a year earlier due largely to losses on investments used to hedge against swings in interest rates.

Still, it was the 12th straight

profitable quarter for the government-controlled company. Washington-based Fannie also said Friday that it will pay a dividend of \$1.9 billion to the U.S. Treasury next month. Fannie will have paid \$136.4 billion in dividends, exceeding the \$116 billion it received from taxpayers during the financial crisis.

The government rescued Fannie and smaller sibling Freddie Mac in September 2008.

For Fannie and Freddie, the decline in long-term interest rates last year brought losses on derivatives, financial transactions the companies use to hedge against rate swings.

Fannie and Freddie own or guarantee about half of

all U.S. mortgages, worth about \$5 trillion. Along with other federal agencies, they back roughly 90 percent of new home loans. The two companies don't directly make loans to borrowers. They buy mortgages from lenders, package them as bonds, guarantee them against default and sell them to investors. That helps make loans avail-

able. On Thursday, Freddie posted net income of \$227 million for the fourth quarter. That was down sharply from the same period of 2013, as the company sustained losses on the investments it uses to hedge against swings in interest rates. Freddie also said it will pay a dividend of \$900 million to the government in March. □

Deere profit drops, but tops Wall Street 1Q forecasts

MOLINE, III. (AP) — Deere's first-quarter profit declined, reflecting softer demand for agricultural machinery. Its performance topped analysts' expectations, but its 2015 guidance appeared to disappoint.

The company said that falling farm incomes and lower commodity prices are putting pressure on demand for agricultural machinery, particularly larger models.

Shares slipped in morning trading Friday.

The Moline, Illinois-based company earned \$386.8 million, or \$1.12 per share, for the three months ended Jan. 31. A year earlier it earned \$681.1 million, or \$1.81 per share.

The results still beat Wall Street expectations. The average estimate of analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of 83 cents per share.

"Deere's first-quarter performance reflected slug-



This photo shows the John Deere farming logo at a farming equipment dealership in Petersburg, Ill. Deere & Co. reported quarterly financial results before the market opened Friday, Feb. 20, 2015. (AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

gish conditions in the global farm sector, which reduced demand for agricultural machinery, particularly larger models, and led to lower sales and income," Chairman and

CEO Samuel Allen said in a statement on Friday.

Revenue totaled \$5.61 billion, also beating Wall Street's view. Analysts expected \$5.43 billion, according to Zacks.

Agriculture and turf sales dropped 27 percent mostly on lower shipment volumes, unfavorable foreign currency translation and the previously announced sales of John Deere Land-

scapes and John Deere Water.

Construction and forestry sales climbed 13 percent primarily due to increased shipment volumes.

Going forward, Deere & Co. anticipates fiscal 2015 earnings of about \$1.8 billion.

It foresees company equipment sales falling approximately 17 percent for the year and dropping about 19 percent for the second quarter when compared with the prior-year periods. Deere said that it expects worldwide sales of agriculture and turf equipment to decline by about 23 percent in fiscal 2015.

Deere expects worldwide sales of construction and forestry equipment to be up by about 5 percent in 2015.

The company's stock declined 44 cents to \$91.27 in morning trading Friday. Its shares have risen more than 7 percent over the past year. □

Activist investor demands \$500M buyback by Sotheby's

MICHAEL J. de la MERCED
© 2015 New York Times

Last year, Mick McGuire and Daniel S. Loeb agreed on the same thing: Change was needed at Sotheby's. Now Loeb sits on the company's board after having all but won a bruising proxy fight. But McGuire remains unhappy with how Sotheby's is being run.

McGuire's hedge fund, Marcato Capital Management, sent a letter to Sotheby's board Friday calling on the company to buy back \$500 million worth of

shares. The demand comes a week after the auction house announced plans to suspend some capital returns to shareholders while it searches for a new chief executive.

The letter hints at a potential conflict between two of the busier activist investors. Both men had pressed Sotheby's to return more capital to investors, leading to Loeb's bitter war against the company's board and an eventual truce that gave him three board seats.

Yet in Friday's letter, addressed to the company's lead independent director, Domenico De Sole, McGuire expressed frustration with what he called poor returns on the auction house's capital.

"This willful neglect on the part of both management and the finance committee of the board must end urgently," McGuire wrote. "Shareholders deserve leadership that combines sound business strategy with skilled financial management."

McGuire also called for the dismissal of Sotheby's chief financial officer, Patrick McClymont. Buttressing the demand are quotes from internal communications in late 2013 between McClymont, a Goldman Sachs banker at the time, and company executives disparaging Marcato's motives.

The emergence of McGuire's demands poses yet another headache for Sotheby's as it continues to search for a successor to William F. Ruprecht, the

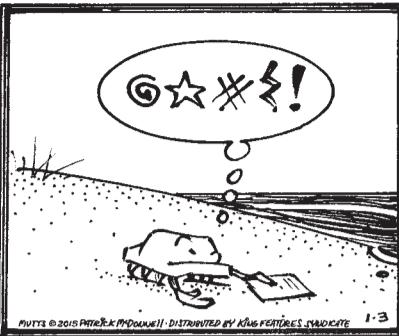
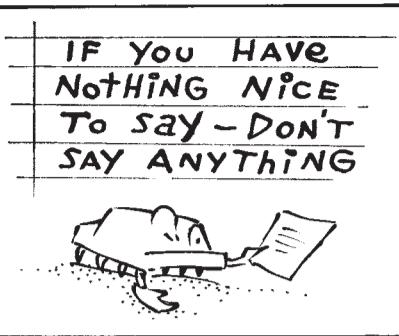
chief executive who was attacked by Loeb during the proxy fight last year.

A representative for Sotheby's pointed to the company's statement from last week announcing its capital plans.

"As we conduct our search for a new chief executive to lead Sotheby's, we decided it is best to wait until a new leader is in place before making significant decisions about capital allocation," De Sole said.

News of the letter was reported earlier by CNBC. □

Mutts



6 Chix



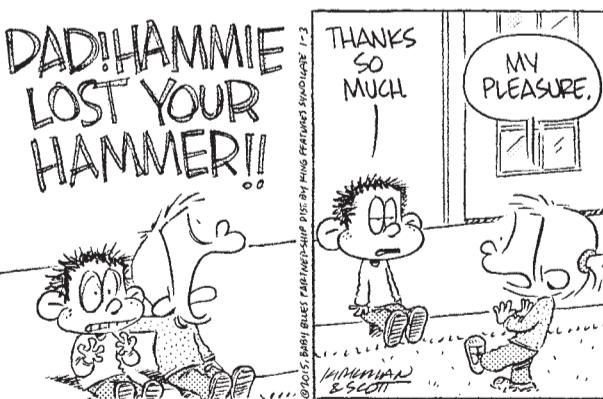
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

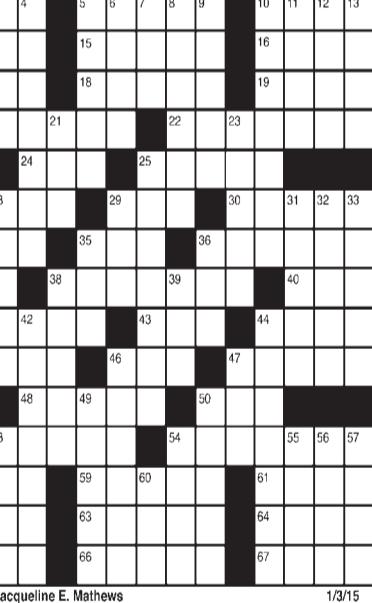
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2	5			9	1			
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	8	6						

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

2	9	7	4	6	3	5	8	1
5	8	6	1	9	2	7	3	4
3	1	4	8	7	5	2	6	9
9	4	3	7	2	6	1	5	8
1	7	2	3	5	8	4	9	6
6	5	8	9	4	1	3	7	2
7	3	9	2	8	4	6	1	5
8	2	5	6	1	7	9	4	3
4	6	1	5	3	9	8	2	7



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/3/15

Friday's Puzzle Solved

THIN	RECAP	SHOE
RENO	ERODE	PAIN
EAST	COLOR	BLIND
ELI	NEST	LARKS
GLADE	HES	
ADHERE	GUSHER	
GETTY	GRABS	LOT
OAFS	FLOGS	DAME
GNU	SEATS	MISER
SLOPED	HUSTON	
PAD	SUSHI	
ASTIR	MINE	CAD
BLANKETING	PITA	
LAKE	LARGE	ITOR
EYED	SNEER	TYPE

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1/3/15

3 Memo
 4 Germfree
 5 "Bye, Pierre!"
 6 Fuzzy residue
 7 Peculiar
 8 Rudely curt
 9 No longer fresh
 10 Appalled
 11 __ Scotia
 12 Drug addict
 13 South __, Indiana
 21 Feathery scarf
 23 Played a role
 25 Yelled
 26 Swedish dollar
 27 Lubricated
 28 Found a sum
 29 __ aside;
 reserve
 31 High points
 32 Native New
 Zealander
 33 Thread holder
 35 Youth
 36 Congressman's
 title: abbr.
 38 Earn; deserve
 39 Big __; semi
 42 Leaves
 44 Natural
 environment
 53 Amphibian with
 leathery skin
 54 S, M, L or XL
 55 Etna's output
 56 Related
 57 Ruby & scarlet
 60 Broadcast

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From 10:00am - 12:00pm \$ 349.000

Ruby Villa

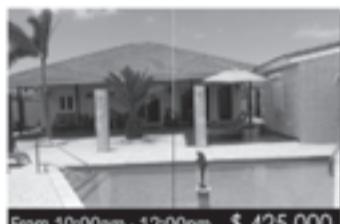
ID# 1090 Beautiful villa in an upscale area, minutes from high-rise hotels & beaches. Offers an open floor plan with equipped kitchen, dining area and living room. 2 beds and 2 baths. House measures 135 m² on 479 m² land.



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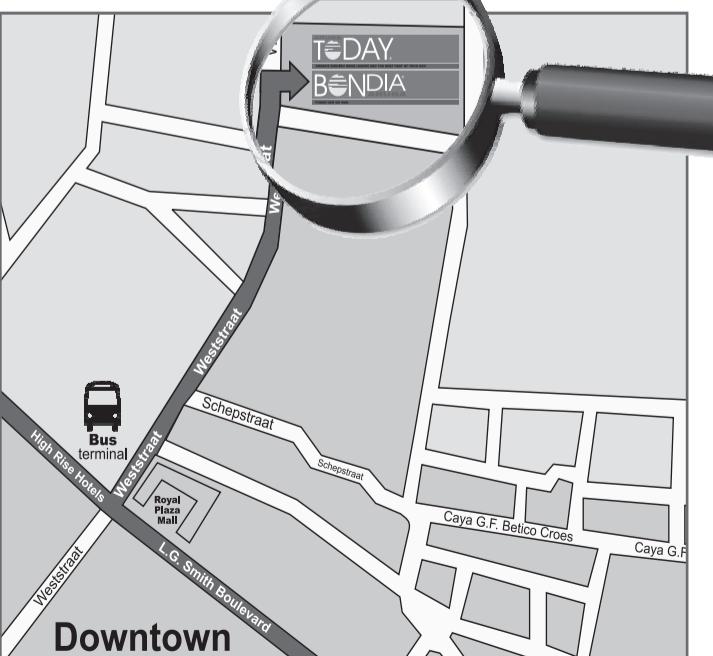
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24/7

Winter weather both toasty and cold; a tale of 2 nations

By SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) -- It may be hard to believe for a country that's shivering from Maine to Miami, but 2015 has gotten off to a rather toasty start.

Last month was the second warmest January on record globally, behind 2007, with temperatures 1.4 degrees above the average for the 20th century, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Meteorologists calculated that the United States in January was 2.9 degrees warmer than normal, making it the 24th warmest January since 1880.

In America, January and the entire winter so far has been a tale of two nations: record hot in the West, bone-chilling cold to the East. While Boston is buried in more than 8 feet of snow, parts of Pacific



In this Jan. 7, 2015 file photo, Diego Porto Carreri, left, and girlfriend Monica Ochoa enjoy the hot weather at the Whittier Narrows Recreational Area in El Monte, Calif. Associated Press

Northwest that depend on winter snow have gotten next to nothing.

"Winter seems to have completely forgotten about us out here," said Kathie Dello, deputy director of the Oregon Climate Service at Oregon State University. "If we could find a way of sending that snow out here, we'd really, really appreciate that."

Flowers have already started popping out and the ski industry is desperate, Dello said: "You can't ski on rain, you can't ski on dirt."

But you can certainly ski in New England, if you can dig out.

California is having its warmest winter on record for a second consecutive year. And for the first time, San Francisco had no rain



In this Feb. 10, 2015 file photo, Lee Anderson adds to the pile of snow beside the sidewalk in front of his house in Somerville, Mass., as his dog Ace watches. Associated Press

in January.

What's happened is that high pressure - nicknamed the ridiculously resilient ridge - has parked just west of California with unusually warm ocean water, preventing storms and cold from sneaking into the West, according to NOAA climatologist Jake Crouch. Then the jet stream dips south from Canada, bringing

the cold to the Midwest and East and the cold in the East combines with the warm water of the Atlantic to provide big snow in the Northeast, he said.

And while it had been chilly in the East and Midwest, up until this week it hadn't been too record breaking, especially compared to what's been going on out West, Crouch said. □



Snow coats Navy Pier surrounded by ice covered Lake Michigan, Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015, in Chicago.

Associated Press

By JOHN FLESHER

AP Environmental Writer

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) -- For the second consecutive winter, bitter weather threatens to turn the surface of the Great Lakes into a vast, frozen plain.

Nearly 81 percent of the lakes' surface area was covered with ice, the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab-

oratory reported Friday. That was down slightly from more than 85 percent the previous day - a glitch that probably happened because strong winds broke apart some ice and created open spots detected by satellites, said George Leshkevich, a physical scientist with the lab in Ann Arbor. But with forecasts calling

Most of Great Lakes surface frozen for second straight year

for frigid weather at least through the end of the month, the ice cover may keep expanding, he said. It's grown rapidly as temperatures have plunged this month, nearly doubling over the past couple of weeks.

Records show the lakes' most widespread freeze was 94.7 percent in 1979. The ice cover topped out at 92.2 percent last March. Significant portions of the lakes typically froze over decades ago, Leshkevich said, but the frequency of severe winters has declined since the late 1990s. "Two almost record-setting years back to back would be very unusual," he said. One likely explanation

for the rapid buildup this month is that 2014's freeze lasted so long - Lake Superior wasn't completely ice-free until June - and summer was so mild that the lakes didn't absorb much heat, he said. "So we started this season with below-water temperatures to begin with."

The ice blanket reaches across more than 90 percent of Lakes Superior, Huron and Erie, while Lakes Michigan and Ontario are more than halfway covered.

It has produced some spectacular visual images, from ice caves along the Lake Michigan shoreline to a glacial buildup making it appear that Niagara Falls

had frozen in place. But it's a headache for the Coast Guard, whose cutters open channels for vessels hauling vital cargo such as heating oil and road salt. The Detroit-based tug Bristol Bay has struggled for days to free the Arthur M. Anderson, a freighter stranded about 70 miles east of Cleveland in ice up to 10 feet thick. The Canadian Coast Guard has dispatched an icebreaker to assist. The job has taken so much longer than expected that the Bristol Bay's crew ran low on food and had to receive a delivery by helicopter, which lowered supplies in their rescue basket. □



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This photo provided by courtesy of GKIDS, Inc. shows a scene from the animated feature film, "The Tale of The Princess Kaguya."

Associated Press

Oscar-nominated animators weigh in on 'Lego Movie' snub

MIKE CIDONI LENNOX
AP Entertainment Writer

BEVERLY HILLS, California

(AP) — Oscar-nominated animators felt like something was missing at the film academy's annual celebration of the best animated films: Their colleagues from "The Lego Movie."

The most popular animated feature of the year failed to earn an Oscar nod.

"It's tough, because we love those guys," "Big Hero 6" producer Roy Conli said of the film's directors, Phil Lord and Chris Miller.

"And we love their movie," added "Big Hero" co-director Chris Hall. The makers of "Big Hero 6," "The Boxtrolls," "How to Train Your Dragon 2," "Song of the Sea" and "The Tale of the Princess Kaguya" gathered at film academy headquarters in Beverly Hills, California, Thursday to discuss their nominated films. The animation community is relatively small and pretty

tight. Many nominees said they know or have worked with "Lego" filmmakers Lord and Miller. So why no nomination for their movie? "I think some people hadn't seen the film in the Academy, and they said, 'Lego Movie'? It's a toy advertisement!" said Anthony Stacchi, co-director of "The Boxtrolls."

Tomm More, an academy member who directed "Song of the Sea," said: "The only thing I can imagine is members on the committee all presumed that all of the members were voting for 'Lego' (so they voted for something else). That's the only thing I can imagine, 'cause I thought it was a great movie."

"Big Hero 6" co-director Chris Williams and "How to Train Your Dragon 2" producer Bonnie Arnold said the slight for "Lego" could just come down the year's slate of quality animated features. □

O'Reilly contests 'Mother Jones' article about his reporting**FRAZIER MOORE****AP Television Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Fox News Channel host Bill O'Reilly is contesting allegations that he embellished his past as a war correspondent.

An article in Mother Jones magazine calls into question O'Reilly's accounts of his experiences as a CBS News correspondent covering the 1982 Falklands War between Great Britain and Argentina.

The article, titled "Bill O'Reilly Has His Own Brian Williams Problem," attempts to paint O'Reilly with the same brush as the NBC News anchor who last week was suspended for six months for misrepresenting his experiences covering the Iraq War and is being investigated for questions that have arisen about other stories.

"It's purely a political play to divert attention from the Williams situation," O'Reilly said Thursday, adding that Mother Jones "trumped up something from 33 years ago." O'Reilly was a CBS News correspondent in 1981-82. The Mother Jones article focuses on O'Reilly's use of the word "war zone," citing his 2001 book,

"The No Spin Zone: Confrontations With the Powerful and Famous in America," in which he wrote, "I've reported on the ground in active war zones from El Salvador to the Falklands."

It also points to his Fox News show, "The O'Reilly Factor,"



In this Oct. 28, 2013 file photo, political commentator Bill O'Reilly attends the National Geographic Channel's "Killing Kennedy" world premiere screening reception at The Newseum, in Washington.

Associated Press

when on a 2013 broadcast O'Reilly recalled rescuing his photographer "in a war zone in Argentina, in the Falkland Islands, where my photographer got run down and then hit his head and was bleeding from the ear on the concrete."

"That took place in Buenos Aires during a violent demonstration following the 10-week Falklands War that killed more than 900 people."

O'Reilly said he has never claimed to have been in the Falklands during the war. Linking "war zone" with the Falklands, he said, was "shorthand."

"Everybody knows you're not there, because nobody (from the American news media) was there," O'Reilly

said. He called "delusional" the article's accusation that the violence in Buenos Aires on the day the Argentines surrendered wasn't part of the Falklands War and wasn't combat.

After CBS, O'Reilly, 65, worked at ABC News before replacing David Frost as anchor of the syndicated "Inside Edition" in 1989. He joined Fox News Channel at its inception in 1996. As host of "The O'Reilly Factor," he consistently leads in the cable-news ratings.

On Friday's "Factor" he was scheduled to address the article in his Talking Points Memo, declaring its authors sought "to take the Brian Williams situation and wrap it around my neck for ideological reasons." □

Veteran Lester Holt in unique position at NBC

DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Lester Holt's first report card as NBC's choice to fill in for suspended anchor Brian Williams as "Nightly News" anchor found him maintaining the network's ratings lead, although the competition has tightened.

The understated under-study has worked without a break since Williams took himself off the newscast on Feb. 7 and was suspended for six months by NBC News on Feb. 10. The network continues to investigate Williams for misrepresenting his experiences as a journalist.

"Nightly News" with Holt averaged 9.43 million viewers last week, the Nielsen company said. ABC's "World News Tonight" had 9.03 million viewers and the "CBS Evening News" had 7.63 million. The 400,000-viewer advantage over ABC last week is smaller than the average 587,000-viewer edge by NBC for the season that began last September.

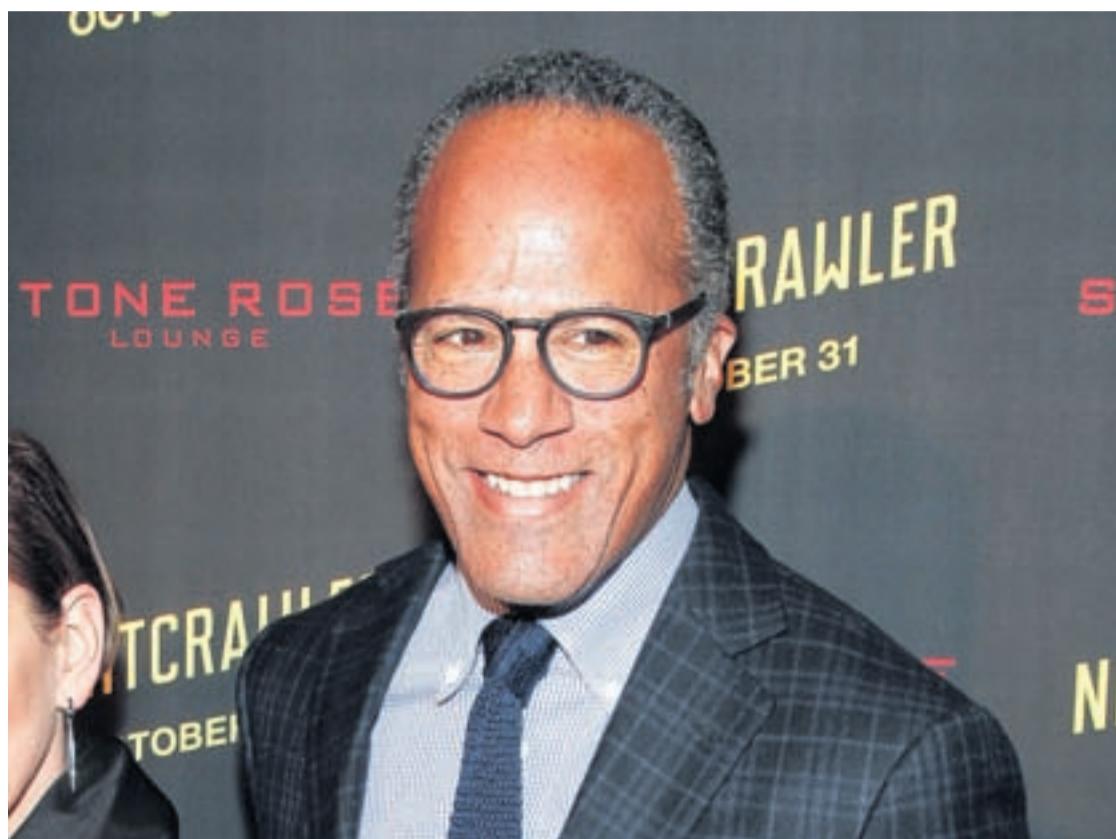
Holt, 55, has been with NBC News since 2000 and before that worked as a news anchor in Chicago for 14 years. Besides being Williams' chief sub for the past two years, he co-anchors "Dateline NBC," "Weekend Today" and "Nightly News" on the weekends.

He's been placed in a uniquely awkward position, asked to right the ship for a company desperate to get out of the headlines, not knowing whether it's a temporary position or one that could become permanent. And if Williams

clearly, Lester is just doing the network a favor in a way."

He called Holt a wise choice for the role. Holt has unassailable credentials, works hard and does the job without drawing attention to himself, Ka-

now." Holt is choosing to keep his head down and do the job, not speaking publicly about his role. He's an accomplished bass guitar player, but he's not going on entertainment programs to show his chops



In this Oct. 27, 2014 file photo, Lester Holt attends the New York premiere of "Nightcrawler" in New York.

does not return, what can — or should — Holt do to prove he's the right person for the job?

"It's tough," said veteran news executive Rick Kaplan, once Holt's boss when he was MSNBC president. "He has to be very careful, because until Brian's future is outlined very

plan said.

"What NBC needs is quiet competence, and Lester has that in abundance," Kaplan said. "Lester is someone everybody can be proud of. He is somebody the people of NBC News can be proud of and rally behind, because that's what they need right

Associated Press

or swap stories about the news business. Frequent appearances on talk shows led to trouble for Williams, and NBC knows that it's no time to display how entertaining their news anchor is.

"I never believed the anchorman should be the know-it-all," Holt said in a 2003 interview with The Associated Press. "And I try to communicate that to the audience. While I have some knowledge from my years of experience, what I want to do is walk you through this because we're all walking through this together."

When the Iraq War started last decade, MSNBC similarly worked Holt hard, often giving him anchor shifts during the day and in the evening, and having him appear on "Today" in the morning.

There's no indication Holt has lusted after Williams' job. They're the same age and, until two weeks ago, Williams was about as se-

cure as you can get in the broadcast business, armed with a long-term contract and atop the ratings. But there's also no indication Holt won't work to take advantage of an opportunity.

NBC will be watching closely to see how the Holt-anchored broadcast holds up in the ratings. "Nightly News" won on four of the five nights last week, losing only on Wednesday, the evening after Williams was suspended and his name was stripped from the broadcast. NBC has won 282 straight weeks in the ratings, Nielsen said.

But reliance on ratings is tricky. Suppose NBC sinks — would it be because viewers didn't like Holt, or because they were angry at NBC because of what Williams did? Or angry at NBC because of how Williams was treated?

Holt's lack of flashiness may be just what NBC needs now, but that's something that could be a handicap when executives are choosing the person who would essentially be the face of the network news division. Executives often feel they need stars in that role, the Katie Couric, Diane Sawyer or Matt Lauer of the world. David Muir's recent success replacing Sawyer at "World News Tonight" shows the desire for big names may be overrated.

While people like Russ Mitchell, Carole Simpson and James Brown have filled in, and Max Robinson was a co-anchor at ABC News more than 30 years ago, a black journalist has never been a sole anchor on one of the three network evening newscasts. There will be interest in whether Holt has the chance to be the first.

"I'm not ascribing motives," said Richard Prince, a former Washington Post journalist now at the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education. "I'm just saying that it hasn't happened." NBC's immediate goal is to find Holt a few days off, preferably by this weekend. □

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The Moral Injury



DAVID BROOKS

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David J. Morris returned from Iraq with a case of post-traumatic stress disorder. The former Marine turned war correspondent was plagued by nightmares. His imagination careened out of control; he envisioned fireballs erupting while on trips to the mall. His emotions could go numb, but his awareness was hypervigilant. Images and smells from the war were tattooed eternally fresh on his brain, and he circled back to them remorselessly.

"Trauma destroys the fabric of time," Morris writes in his book, "The Evil Hours." "In normal time you move from one moment to the next, sunrise to sunset, birth to death. After trauma, you may move in circles, find yourself being sucked backwards into an eddy or bouncing like a rubber ball from now to then to back again. ... In the traumatic universe the basic laws of matter are suspended: ceiling fans can be helicopters, car exhaust can be mustard gas."

Morris' book is so good because it relies on literature, history and psychology to communicate the reality of PTSD, both to those who live with it and those who never have. But this book is also important because it's part of a broader re-evaluation of trauma. Most discussion about PTSD thus far has been about fear and the conquering of fear. But, over the past few years, more people have come to understand PTSD is also about exile - moral exile.

We don't think about it much, but in civilian life we live enmeshed in a fabric of moral practices and evaluations. We try to practice kindness and to cause no pain. People who have been to war have left this universe behind. That's because war - no matter how justified or unjustified, noble or ignoble - is always a crime. It involves accidental killings, capricious death for one but not another, tainted situations where every choice is murderously wrong.

Many veterans feel guilty because they lived while others died. Some feel ashamed because they didn't bring all their men home and wonder what they could have done differently to save them. When they get home they wonder if there's something wrong with them because they find war repugnant but also thrilling. They hate it and miss it.

Many of their self-judgments go to extremes. A comrade died because he stepped on an improvised explosive device and his commander feels unrelenting guilt because he didn't go down a different street. Insurgents used women and children as shields, and soldiers and Marines feel a totalistic black stain on themselves because of an innocent child's face, killed in the firefight. The self-condemnation can be crippling.

The victims of PTSD often feel morally tainted by their experiences, unable to recover confidence in their own goodness, trapped in a sort of spiritual solitary confinement, looking back at the rest of the world from beyond the barrier of what happened. They find themselves unable to communicate their condition to those who remained at home, resenting civilians for their blind innocence. People generally don't suffer high rates of PTSD after natural disasters. Instead, people suffer from PTSD after moral atrocities. Soldiers who've endured the depraved world of combat experience their own symptoms. Trauma is an explosive cataclysm of the soul.

We now have a growing number of books and institutions grappling with this reality, including Phil Klay's novel "Redeployment," which won the National Book Award; Nancy Sherman's forthcoming "Afterwar: Healing the Moral Wounds of Our Soldiers"; and therapy programs like the one on moral injury found at the San Diego Naval Medical Center. These writers and therapists suggest that there has to be a moral reckoning, a discernment process that doesn't whitewash what happened but does lead to merciful judgments about how much guilt should be borne; settled and measured conclusions about how responsibility for terrible things should be apportioned.

Sherman, who is a philosopher at Georgetown University, emphasizes that most of the work will have to be done at the micro level - through individual conversations between veterans and civilians that go beyond the cheap grace of "thank you for your service." The conversations have to deal with the individual facts of each case. The goal is to get veterans to adopt the stance of a friendly observer, to make clear how limited choices are when one is caught in a random, tragic situation, to arrive at catharsis and self-forgiveness about what was actually blameworthy and what wasn't.

The civilian enters into the world the veteran actually inhabited during those awful crowded hours and expands his own moral awareness. The veteran feels trusted, respected and understood - re-integrated into the fabric of his or her homeland. We live in a culture that emphasizes therapy, but trauma often has to be overcome morally, through rigorous philosophical autobiography, nuanced judgment, case by case. □



Islam and the West at War



ROGER COHEN

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After a Danish movie director at a seminar on "Art, Blasphemy and Freedom of Expression" and a Danish Jew guarding a synagogue were shot dead in Copenhagen, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, the prime minister of Denmark, uttered a familiar trope: "We are not in the middle of a battle between Islam and the West. It's not a battle between Muslims and non-Muslims. It's a battle between values based on the freedom of the individual and a dark ideology."

This statement - with its echoes of President Barack Obama's vague references to "violent extremists" uncoupled from the fundamentalist Islam to which said throat-cutting extremists pledge allegiance - scarcely stands up to scrutiny. It is empty talk.

Across a wide swath of territory, in Iraq, in Syria, in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, in Yemen, the West has been or is at war, or near-war, with the Muslim world, in a failed bid to eradicate a metastasizing Islamist movement of murderous hatred toward Western civilization.

To call this movement, whose most potent recent manifestation is the Islamic State, a "dark ideology" is like calling Nazism a reaction to German humiliation in World War I: true but wholly inadequate. There is little point in Western politicians rehearsing lines about there being no battle between Islam and the West,

when in all the above-mentioned countries tens of millions of Muslims, with much carnage as evidence, believe the contrary.

The Danish filmmaker Finn Norgaard was killed a little more than a decade after another movie director, Theo van Gogh, was slain in Amsterdam for making a film critical of Islam's treatment of women. The Islamists' war is against freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, freedom of blasphemy, sexual freedom - in short, core characteristics of democracies seen by the would-be rebuilders of the Caliphate as signs of Western debasement.

Do not provoke them with cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, some say, show respect for Islam, the peaceful faith of some 1.6 billion people. But what, pray, was the "provocation" of Dan Uzan, the Jewish security guard outside the Copenhagen synagogue?

Islam is a religion that has spawned multifaceted political movements whose goal is power. Islam, as such, is fair game for commentators, caricaturists and cartoonists, whose inclination to mock the depredations of theocracy and political Islam's cynical uses of the Prophet cannot be cowed by fear.

Over the more than 13 years since al-Qaida attacked America on 9/11, we have seen trains blown up in Madrid, the Tube and a bus bombed in London, Western journalists beheaded, the staff of Charlie Hebdo slaughtered, Jews killed in France and Belgium and now Denmark. This is not the work of a "dark ideology" but of jihadi terror.

On the right of Europe's political spectrum, anger is rising against Islam, against marginalized Muslim communities, who in turn feel discriminated against and misrepresented, with cause. Several thousand young European Muslims troop off to join the Islamic State. Europe's Jews are on edge, with cause. Israel calls them home. In the United States, three Muslim students were killed

this month by a gunman in a possible hate crime denounced by Obama as "brutal and outrageous." A tide of retaliatory menace rises.

Who or what is to blame? There are two schools. For the first, it is the West that is to blame through its support for Israel (seen as the latest iteration of Western imperialism in the Levant); its wars (Iraq); its brutality, (Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib); its killing of civilians (drones); its oil-driven hypocrisy (a jihadi-funding Saudi ally). For the second, it is rather the abject failure of the Arab world, its blocked societies where dictators face off against political Islam, its repression, its feeble institutions, its sectarianism precluding the practice of participatory citizenship, its wild conspiracy theories, its inability to provide jobs or hope for its youth, that gives the Islamic State its appeal.

I find the second view more persuasive.

The rise of the Islamic State, and Obama's new war, are a direct result of the failure of the Arab Spring, which had seemed to offer a path out of the deadlocked, jihadi-spawning societies of the Arab world.

Only Arabs can find the answer to this crisis. But history, I suspect, will not judge Obama kindly for having failed to foster the great liberation movement that rose up in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria and elsewhere. Inaction is also a policy: Nonintervention produced Syria today.

I hear the words of Chokri Belaid, the brave Tunisian lawyer, shortly before he was gunned down by Islamist fanatics on Feb. 6, 2013: "We can disagree in our diversity but within a civilian, peaceful and democratic framework. Disagree in our diversity, yes!"

To speak of a nonspecific "dark ideology," to dismiss the reality of conflict between the West and Islam, is also to undermine the anti-Islamist struggle of brave Muslims like Belaid - and these Muslims are the only people, ultimately, who can defeat the black-flagged jihadi death merchants. □



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